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HISTORY OF THE ADMINISTRATION

OF

JOHN DE WITT

GRAND PENSIONARY OF HOLLAND

By JAMES GEDDES

Vol. I.

1623–1654

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PREFACE.

The period comprehended in the following book is not a heroic period, and John de Witt is, in no sense, a hero. His age has little in common with the noble epoch described with so much graphic force by Mr. Motley, and in studying it we are moving in altogether a lower world of human interest, passion, duty, and activity. But this has had less to do with the neglect of the period by modern Dutch historians than the extreme difficulty, and the ever-recurring impossibility, of getting at the precise measure of De Witt's personal work and influence; and it is the overwhelming labor this entails among unpublished manuscripts that has stood in the way of any serious attempt being hitherto made to write an account of his life or a history of his administration. His public life, and all that can be gleaned of his private life, lie entombed beneath mountains of unprinted letters and documents. Yet, in some respects, so scanty are the materials that, for some years before he entered on public life, his professional occupation and whereabouts can only be arrived at by piecing together the addresses of the extant letters sent to him by his friends. And, as regards his public life, each town of the Seven Provinces has its local archives, each Province has its provincial records, the States-General had theirs, and each family of importance has its store-room of correspondence and muniments. The lifetime of half a dozen men would not suffice to exhaust these, and, until they are sifted and made public, anything like a final history of this period, or a final life of De Witt, is impossible. The man De Witt, as he lived and moved, we do not expect ever to see much of. His contemporaries did not write memoirs, and the social, non-political, non-official side of

him—the human side of him, in short—we have no hope of ever discovering.

The manuscript letters to De Witt, and the drafts of letters from him, fill a very large section of the public Record Office at the Hague. Selections from the latter have been published, but a legion of them—all of the utmost consequence in his history—has never seen the light. It is by a careful examination of these, and of the letters addressed to him (none of which has been published), that the author has striven to get at what De Witt's personal influence actually was, and to prevent this estimate of the man's real and personal achievement in the world from degenerating into a vague and general "History of his Times," in which his doings are not discriminated from those of his contemporaries. Important help has been obtained from our own State Records, and from the unpublished correspondence of the French ambassadors preserved in the public archives at Paris—quarters from which no one hitherto has sought for light on this subject.

It has been a work of great difficulty to separate De Witt's own doings from those of his party. We cannot always see, even at great moments, where he initiated and led, and where he yielded and followed. He was in daily and hourly deliberation with a knot of astute and trusted men, and what was his and what was their portion of the product, only a Memoir-writer behind the scenes could let us know, and none exists.

The author cannot omit acknowledging the courteous readiness with which the University authorities of Leyden placed the records of the University before him. To the keeper of the Archives at the Hague and his assistants, and to the chief librarian of the *Koninklijke Bibliotheek*, also at the Hague, and his assistants, the author's thanks are likewise due for their willing aid. The late M. Hoog, of Leyden, a descendant of the De Witts, very kindly permitted him to examine the family portraits and the valuable family papers in his possession.

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BOOK I.

De Witt's Birth and Education.

JOHN DE WITT.

Chapter I.

ORIGIN, RISE, AND MUNICIPAL MACHINERY OF DORDRECHT.

Amidst the endless labyrinth of interlacing streams through which the river Maas seeks the sea, piling island behind island in inextricable confusion, there has been deposited, far inland, what was formerly a great alluvial shoal, and what is now a small triangular mud-bank, on the northern point of which stands the town of Dordrecht, or Dort. The traveller from Rotterdam up the Maas, after an hour or two's sailing between the flat Dutch pastures, comes suddenly upon the town, standing, as it were, in the stream before him, crescent-shaped, a seeming semicircle of human dwellings. It is of a deep, dingy red; the houses are all of brick; here and there a blue-slated roof peers from the mass of red tiles, and at one end rises high above all its great cathedral, whose lofty steeple looks far over the green meadows and the maze of winding streams. Some scattered shipping lying along its quays, and lines of railway to east and west, tell us that it stands on one of the lines of the world's commerce.

Antiquaries and topographers make out, successfully they believe, that the little mud island has been an island only since 1421. On a November night of that year the configuration of the country around was changed. The low country to the south of the town was ingulfed by an inundation; the town was torn from the main-land; and where Dordrecht had seen rich parishes and many a smiling village, she beheld thereafter from her old church-tower, to the utmost verge of her south-

ern sky-line, an expanse of stagnant water. Time has covered it with reeds and bushes and all manner of water growths; and the Dutch, from its products, have given it the name of the Biesbosch—the forest, or "bush," of rushes.

On an angle of the alluvial mud-bank, be it island or mainland, one Dirk, a "Count in Friesland," or rather, probably, the son of such, and the third of the name, planted himself about forty or fifty years before the Norman conquest of England. Perhaps he found upon it the huts of a few rude fishermen and boors, the former obtaining their food in the innumerable water-courses, the latter in pasturing cattle and cultivating the rich silt which the river had deposited.[1] Here Dirk built or strengthened for himself a tower or fortress, and began to levy a toll upon the vessels passing up and down the channels which his fortress surveyed.[2] His outlook from his tower was over morass and wilderness, and muddy, swift-flowing streams. The swamp around him, and the alluvial bank on which he had made good his footing, were the joint property of the Bishops of Utrecht and Luyck; but necessity or greed had lodged him in the delta of the Maas, and here he stood at bay against the world.[3] His toll enraged the trading towns upon the rivers, and his usurped possession awakened the wrath of the two bishops. He held, however, what he had taken, and gave harder knocks than he received.[4] So he set-

[1] Beverwyck's *Beschryvingvan Dordrecht*, 1640, p. 118.

[2] Ibid. *Beschryving*, p. 300. He probably built the fortress. Dirk was the lineal descendant of counts, probably "Counts in Friesland." The word "Holland" cannot yet be traced. Beverwyck says he "strengthened himself at Dordrecht."

[3] Oudenhoven's *Oudt ende Nieuw Dordrecht*, Haarlem, 1666, p. 478. He was a great thorn in the side of Bishop Adelbold of Utrecht, who induced the Emperor Henry II. to authorize Duke Godfrey of Lorraine, and the Bishops of Cologne, Utrecht, and Luyck, to join their forces against Dirk. Dirk, with the aid of his morass, was victorious. The Bishops of Luyck and of Utrecht appear to have had rights in common over the morass which Dirk was making his own.

[4] Jacob van Oudenhoven, in his *Oudt ende Nieuw Dordrecht*, p. 106, quotes from *Baldericus, Noviomeusensis en Tornacensis Episcopus in Chronico Camerœ et Atreb.* l. iii. c. 19 (not quite a contemporary of Dirk), as saying that the place where the war between Dirk III. and Bishop Adelbold of Utrecht was carried on was "uninhabitable in consequence of bushes and morasses, and had received from the inhabitants the name of Merwede." See also p. 478.

tled himself in his swampy fastness, and either he or his immediate successors began to call themselves, no longer "Counts in Friesland," but, after the bog which they had captured, "Counts of Holland."

At the foot of Dirk's fortress the dwellings of men multiplied; the fishing and peasant village expanded into a town, and by 1064, a quarter of a century after Dirk's death, we have the first historical document which contains its name.[1] In this charter it appears as Thurendrecht, and in charters almost as old it is called Thuredrecht, Thurdrecht, and Durdrecht, from which its later name of Dordrecht easily comes.[2] About the origin and meaning of the word there have been many guesses, to the number of which we have no wish to add. The characteristic fact about it is that its final syllable (drecht) enters into the composition of many words in this portion of the Netherlands — Utrecht, Swyndrecht, Papendrecht—and is more commonly met with in some places than "dyk" or "dam." Writers connect the prevalent syllable with *trajectus*, a word which the Roman occupation had left behind it, and which, in its abbreviated form, had entered into the language of the Teutonic people who inhabited this corner of Gaul.

The Dirks themselves, to whom the town owed its first impulses to greatness, if not even its being, were fighting-men, and were not to be cooped up in a morass cut by a net-work of streams. They struck out all round, fighting with the Frisians in the land now called Holland, struggling with the Bishop of Utrecht, in restless conflict with the Dukes of Henegowen, and holding their own even against the Emperor. In those early struggles, Dordrecht, as their chief town, bore its share. They struggled and fought their way to the northward, and joined piece after piece to their swampy wilderness. At last their conquests absorbed the territory which had been owned by the first two Dirks (before the third of the name had planted himself in this Dordrecht marsh), and which,

[1] Van de Waal, *Handvesten, Privilegien enz. der stad Dordrecht*, tome I. p. 7, note *f*.

[2] Ibid.

speaking roughly, stretched north of the present Amsterdam.[1] The name of Holland spread northward with their north-spreading conquests, and what originally had been the designation of a spongy tract around Dordrecht, between the Merwede and the Maas, gradually became the name of an imposing countdom. In the same year (1064) in which we first meet the name of Dordrecht, we also meet, for the first time, the name of "Count of Holland"—not the Holland now known to political geography, but the bog in the neighborhood or heart of which Dirk had built his tower.[2]

Through the stormy Middle Ages, Dirk's town of Dordrecht continued to fight and to grow until it became the first town in Holland and the head-centre of Dutch life. Under the house of these Counts of Holland, which came to an end in 1299, it gathered a great trade in salt, wine, and woollen cloth, and became tunnelled with the underground wine-cellars or warehouses of its merchants.

The same 280 years, dating from the building of Dirk's tower, had given it the germs of a municipal machinery, namely, a schout (the Count's bailiff),[3] nine schepens (échevins, *scheppen*, to judge), who constituted the bench of justice in the town, five councillors (raaden), who sat with the schepens in the court of justice, and certain officers bearing the alternating names of burgomaster, collector of taxes, or treasurer. All these were the officers of the Count, and were directly appointed by him. That which the modern world calls liberty, the right of a community to elect its rulers, was not yet born in Dordrecht. The government of the town was in the hands of the schout, schepens, and councillors; and from 1252, perhaps from an earlier date, they had power deputed to them by the Count to make such laws and regulations for the general

[1] Charles the Simple granted lands to the first Dirk, in 922, in the neighborhood of Alkmaar.

[2] The Holland countdom is supposed to date from the year 922; but there is really no safe footing until the time of Dirk III.—Wijnne's *Geschiedenis van het Vaderland*, 1870, pp. 12, 19.

[3] *Oudenhoven*, p. 193. The schout's office was to cause offenders to be arrested, to bring them to trial before the schepens, and to attend to the execution of the sentence passed on them.

weal of the town as they might think requisite.[1] The functionary called burgomaster was in those days, as his other name shows, a mere tax-collector. He had no voice in the government of the town, and was not even the germ out of which the burgomaster of a later age grew.[2] But the name shows that during the same interval of 280 years the burghers themselves had been growing up. And not the burgher only; for the trades of the town had been also already organizing themselves and obtaining privileges, and guilds were already in being. The oldest extant guild charter in Dordrecht is dated 1200, and it refers to others, now lost, of an earlier date.[3] Dirk's toll, too, had already become sanctified by parchments and formidable waxen seals, and the town had acquired the staple privilege of compelling all merchants conveying goods *down* the Lek and Merwede (but not *up*) to unship them at Dordrecht, and there, first of all, offer them for sale. English, French, Brabant, and German merchants flocked to the great market of Dordrecht to buy or sell their wares. The town had become one of the chief marts of north-western Europe.

Thus as late as 1299, when the direct line of the Holland house expired, all power in Dordrecht, so far as the manifold

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[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 23. Handvest of King William, dated January 28, 1252. The power of making "Keuren-wetten, Keuren ende Bevelen" for the common weal is given by this handvest to the schout, the schepens, and the councillors. It is deserving of notice that there is no mention of a burgomaster.

[2] *Van de Wall*, p. 98, compared with p. 93. This authority says that there are parchment accounts extant of the years 1285 and 1286 which more than once make mention of burgomasters; and he adds that these functionaries were not then in the "bewind van zaaken;" they were "alleen ontfangers of schatmeesters;" in later, "tyd kreegen ze eerst mede deel aan den regeering, en hielpen, nevens schepen en raaden, den gewoonen magistraat uitmaken." But on September 29, 1296, the Count of Holland being then in England, the Count of Henegowen granted provisionally on his behalf a "handvest" for the election of nine schepens and two burgomasters until the Count of Holland's return. There is nothing to indicate the duties of these burgomasters mentioned in this "handvest." Still, the appearance of their name, and the facts that the councillors are dropped out of sight, and that the schepens were allowed to elect their successors (instead of receiving their appointment from the Counts), which introduced an enormous change, are the most important features in this handvest. However, the Count of Holland, on his return, did not confirm it, and the appointment of the schepens remained with himself.

[3] *Van de Wall*, p. 295.

extant muniments of the town show, flowed from the Counts. From that time till 1433 (134 years) the countdom was under the lordship of the Houses of Bavaria and Henegowen, and during this period the complexion of the municipal machinery radically changed. Our business here is not with the wide and deep transformation which, for some centuries, had been stealthily creeping over the social life of Europe, but with setting forth, as specifically as the means permit and the subsequent narrative requires, the development of the European spirit in this particular town. First of all, in the earliest years of the Bavarian rule, the staple right was extended; and it was not merely goods coming down the rivers, but now also certain merchandise passing up, that had to be unshipped at Dordrecht, and, in the first instance, exposed for sale there. This doubled the value of Dordrecht as a market. Again, by the purchase and acquisition otherwise of monopolies, the town drew to itself a great trade, and throve on the burdens it imposed on others. Its wealth and importance exposed it to danger. As its water surroundings were not enough to protect the rich-growing citizens amidst the turbulent commotions of the times, it built itself walls, sometimes condemning offenders to erect, or pay for the erection of, so many roods. The first great change noticeable is the growth and organization of the guilds, of which more than forty are named in a charter of 1367.[1] In that year they obtained their magna charta, and were united into a compact body, of which union the immediate cause is not apparent. They became an organized compact body 167 years after the oldest extant guild charter, so long had they taken to grow. But just before 1367 the first indications of new municipal forces are met with, which will grow to something, and change the whole face of the land. Hitherto the schepens and raadsmen (still all officers appointed by the Count) who had served out their period of office had to retire to private life, and had no fur-

[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 295. When Balen (a contemporary of De Witt) wrote his *Beschryving van Dordrecht*, the guilds, which were still very powerful, were thirty-two in number (Balen, p. 76); by Van de Wall's time (1796) the number had not changed.

ther share in the management of the town's affairs. In 1345[1] we have the first historical trace of their being summoned, after having quitted office, to a joint deliberation with the men actually holding office as the governing body of the town —the officiating schepens and raadsmen—at a moment of great emergency, when a disputed succession to the countdom was imminent, and the peace, not of the town only, but of the whole of Holland, was in danger. They were convened by the actual office-holders of the town, to deliberate with them about the best means of preserving the peace of the town. It is important to notice that they were not convened by the Count, the Count being little more than a fortnight dead, and the succession, as we have said, being disputed. These retired functionaries were men experienced in the business and management of the town, and the existing office-holders wanted their advice. The long Hook and Codfish wars were on the point of breaking out, and the prevalent anarchy led, probably, to frequent deliberations by the best men of the town. By 1370 these retired schepens and raadsmen had received the name by which they are to become famous in the later history of Dordrecht—the Old Council, or, as the inhabitants named them, the "Oud Raad."[2]

What we have specially to fix our eye upon in connection with them is this, that though they have been originally in the service of the Count, they are in his service no longer; they are now free and independent burghers, and are growing up as an independent power, almost unnoticed as yet, at the Count's side. At the same time that this new municipal force came into being, the real burgomaster was also born. The mere tax-collecting burgomasters, sometimes two, four, six, or nine in number, disappear apparently with the Holland

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[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 197. In the *Aanmerkelyk Besluit wegens de Bestiering* of October 14, 1345, which furnishes this first historical trace, these retired officials have no name. They are merely described as "die welke voermaels geweest hebben," *i. e.*, "those who have formerly been" schouts, schepens, and raadsmen.

[2] *Van de Wall*, p. 303, where it is mentioned that a similar body existed in Antwerp and Brussels, where it was called "the wide or broad Raad." A kindred institution was found at Heusden and elsewhere.

house, and during the first fifty years of the fourteenth century even the name of burgomaster is nowhere to be found in the numerous records of the town which that period has left to us.[1] Early in the second half of the century we re-encounter two burgomasters—neither of them the tax-gatherer and treasurer of fifty years before. The one is strictly the Count's officer—burgomeester van's Heeren wege—president of the schepens' court, and empowered to see that the rights of the Count within the town were not invaded by its governing authorities or the people. He will become, in course of time, municipal lumber, and, like much other social lumber, continue to be, for a few centuries, after his true functions are exhausted.[2] The other has as yet no name, but he will grow; he has vitality in him, and when the century expires will be known as the burgomaster of the community—burgomeester der gemeente. His function, among other things, will be to see that the Count and Count's officers do not invade the charters, monopolies, and privileges granted or sold by the Count to the people; he is to be the representative man and champion of the burghers. In 1370 an independent Old Raad, in 1386 a people's burgomaster! This was something for the townspeople to have gained. The oldest known mention of this burgomaster in the Dordrecht muniments is 1397, and he is named by the title he subsequently bears.[3] The element is

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[1] *Van de Wall*, pp. 96–98. This writer says that from 1296 to 1345 no trace is to be found of a burgomaster in the numerous muniments of Dordrecht which are still extant. Balen commences his list of burgomasters with the year 1351. See his *Beschryving van Dordrecht*, p. 239. In the *Aanmerkelyk Besluit* of October 14, 1345, referred to in a previous note, there is power granted to choose four burgomasters, and the same Besluit shows that they were to have charge of the receipts from "appelmaaten, vischstallen, vleyschstallen, costerien en poortergelt," etc., for which they were to give reckoning.—*Van de Wall*, p. 197.

[2] *Van de Wall*, p. 394, quotes a curious passage from the *Brielsche costumen van Matthyze* (bij Alkemade en Van der Schelling I., bl. 243 and 244), to show the difference between these two classes of burgomasters.

[3] *Van de Wall*, p. 393. The name burgemeester der gemeente is first discovered in an "Ouden Gildenbrief van het scheepstimmerluiden Gild, gedagteekend," May 29, 1397, "waarby Wigger Baerendsoen nu ter tyt Borghmeester van der Ghemeente wegen en de alingen Achten eenen effening maaken en aan de Gild verschieden Keuren gaven." Ten years later, January 11, 1406, '7, we have the bur-

eliminated at last, the centuries have been slowly ripening for it, and the burgomaster of the later Middle Ages—here he is.

This new burgomaster was the work of the guilds.[1] Trade and commerce brought many visitors to Dordrecht and carried many of its own inhabitants to the great trading and manufacturing towns around them, and new ideas grew in the town. In Brabant and Flanders the burghers had a burgomaster, who had a share in managing the town's business; and Zealand, lying nearer to Brabant and Flanders, and infected by their example, had also admitted a burghers' burgomaster to assist in the government of its towns.[2] Why should not the burghers of Dordrecht have one too? And so the guilds, organized and made compact but a few years previously, and thus full of young and vigorous life, agitated and struggled, or bargained for, or usurped more power, till, in this new office of burgomaster, we have the first result. The wave had been long rolling eastward from Brabant and Flanders; it had passed already over Zealand, and now broke first, in Dordrecht, of all the Holland towns.[3]

An officer who was to be the guardian of the interests and privileges of the burghers, who was to keep watch and ward over the doings of the Count and his executive representatives in the town, and in whom, therefore, lay the germ of hostility to them, could not be viewed with favor by the Counts. Accordingly, the Counts, in consenting to a burghers' burgomaster being admitted to a share in the management of the town's business, took care to fetter and bind the burghers in their choice of a man, as we shall immediately see. For the guilds, however, this encroachment by them upon the authority of the Counts was not enough. An individual representative of the whole joint body of burghers did not satisfy them; the guilds-

gemeester der gemeente and the burgemeester van's Heeren of Gerechts wege mentioned together for the first time.—*Van de Wall*, ibid. Beverwyck, however, assigns the first burgemeester der gemeente to the year 1367, and draws his list from the registers of the town.—(Beverwyck's *Beschryving van Dordrecht*, p. 177.)

[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 393.

[2] *Van de Wall*, p. 95–98; compare p. 393.

[3] *Wagenaar: Vaderlandsche Historie*, iii. p. 362. *Van de Wall*, pp. 97, '8, and p. 393.

men wanted direct representatives of the guilds to sit in the schepens' court and share in the town's management. Hereupon a body of twelve men, called "the good people of the Twelve," was called into existence, or (if it had been in existence for some little time) was made use of as the channel by means of which the guilds were to exercise a greater influence on the affairs of the town. It was short-lived: we can only trace it definitely for three years prior to its abolition in 1385, '6.[1] But it was immediately followed in that year by another body, "the good people of the Eight," which is the product of further commotions on the parts of the guilds, as the preamble of the charter authorizing their election ("to maintain peace and good harmony in the town") testifies. "The Eight" were to be chosen by the Count, out of a nomination list of twenty-four furnished to him by the deacons of the guilds;[2] they were to have the right of sitting in the schepens' court, and to have a vote for the newly arisen burghers' burgomaster, as well as in the weightiest affairs of the town.[3] This was a revolution. The burgomaster of the town was henceforth to be chosen, and the trades, through their machinery of "The Eight," were to have a vote for him. "Modern liberty" was being born in Holland. In the "Burgomaster of the Community," in the "Old Council," and in "The Eight," all arising between 1350 and 1400, we have three vigorous germs of an entirely new municipal life, and all copied from the example of the Brabant or Flemish towns.[4]

[1] See a Zoenbrief having reference to "The Twelve," in *Van de Wall*, under date 1382. The date of the origin of this body and the precise circumstances that led to its origin are not known. Balen thinks it came into existence in 1371; Van de Wall, without fixing a date, is of opinion that it was later. The Zoenbrief of 1382 brings them into indubitable light, and then, by the restless efforts of the guilds, they are being thrust into the schepens' court. It is in the Zoenbrief of that year that their name is first met with. [2] *Van de Wall*, p. 684.

[3] *Van de Wall*, p. 333; where the first "Besluit tot verkiesing van de Goede Luiden van de Agten" is given. See also folio 1729, in reference to the right of the Old Raad to vote for the burgomaster.

[4] This body of Eight was to have the right of sitting in the court of justice, but was to have no vote therein; the Eight were to come to it when called; were entitled to go armed with a knife, and were to be sworn in yearly by the schout, or Count's bailiff. As well as a vote for the burgomaster, they were to have a vote

Throughout the towns of the countdom, kindred forces were also at work, producing results whereby the burghers were invested with a portion of the power in each town hitherto exercised by the Count or his executive representatives. The phenomenon of the age is the gradual passage of authority from the One to a committee or council of the burghers themselves. This body is variously named—sometimes the Vroedschap, or Wysheid, both meaning the ablest and wisest men of the town; and also the Rykheid, or the wealthiest. It seems to have owed its origin to a custom adopted by the Count's municipal officers, of convening the wealthiest and most prudent citizens to consult with them on the interests of the town during the early troubles of the Hook and Codfish wars. It was no longer the whole body of the burghers who were convened by sound of a bell, as had been done when the Count had to communicate with them. A privileged class is here imperceptibly created among the burghers—the class composing the Rykheid, Wysheid, or Vroedschap of the body. In Dordrecht, as we have seen, the body which discharged this function became known as the Old Raad; in all the other towns of Holland it received the name of Vroedschap, originally the assembly of the most prudent.[1] The differing circumstances of each town determined the shape the body was to take, but the same vital force is stirring in them all, and they grow up, like and yet unlike, one type but many varieties.[2]

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for the treasurer of the town. As yet there was no qualification required in them; that is, no restriction was laid on the deacons as to the twenty-four names they might furnish to the Count, which might be chosen from the entire community (geheelre gemeente). The Twelve had not, as the Eight had, a vote for the burgomaster; and as this was undoubtedly the burgomaster of the community, we can say that he must have been born about the date of this Besluit, namely, 1385, '6. According to a Keur of much later date (1434), the burgomeester der gecmente obtained a vote in the schepens' court, but that officer was on the eve, then, of being temporarily abolished.—*Van de Wall*, pp. 522, 562.

[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 422.

[2] There does not appear to have been any money or other qualification required in the newly-born burgomaster of this period; the members of the Old Raad, however, required the qualification of having been retired schepens; the schepens were chosen by the Count without reference to any one; and the Eight required no qualification, as we have just seen.

Whatever the elements of freedom thus laid might have become if left to their natural growth, they had not time to develop themselves before the countdom of Holland passed, in 1433, under the lordship of the House of Burgundy. The aim of that house, ruling a congeries of disjointed, unconnected States, was to tie up the manifold provinces under its sway into one body; to centralize its power and unify its dominions. This was inconsistent with independent municipal life.

The free democratic germs, namely, a burgomaster without a qualification, and the Eight without a qualification, which the House of Burgundy inherited from their predecessors in the countdom of Holland, were got rid of before the end of the century. But, on the other hand, a seeming enlargement of the town's liberties had been granted by the institution of a body called "The Forty."[1] By the first form of this body two of the Count's officers nominated 100 persons, each worth 300 nobles, from which nomination list the deacons of the guilds were to choose forty married men or widowers. These "Forty," after the first year, were to submit a list of fourteen men, each also worth 300 nobles, from whom the Count or his stadtholder was to choose annually seven as schepens and raadsmen.[2] Hitherto the Count had retained the appointment of the schepens and raadsmen in his own hands, and, so far, there was still a clear gain by the community.

The body existed for six years, was then abolished, and after sixteen years was revived with lower qualifications,[3] the reason of its resuscitation being "divers quarrels and differences regarding the renewal of the members of the schepens' court."[4] But by 1494 the qualification had risen to 1000 guldens for each of the Forty, 800 for each schepen and raadsman, and by this time even the good men of the Eight had to be worth 400 guldens each.[5] This was a blow to the democracy of the guilds. But the burgomaster was also henceforth

[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 600. "The Forty" were instituted by a handvest of Duke Philip of Burgundy, June 23, 1456.

[2] *Van de Wall*, p. 600.

[3] Abolished in 1462, and revived in 1478.

[4] *Van de Wall*, p. 680.

[5] Ibid., p. 753. Compare with p. 696.

to be a man of some substance. It had been already fixed that he was to be chosen from the retired schepens or raadsmen—men, at one time at least, worth 800 guldens. These arrangements appear to have existed till 1647.[1] Thus the liberty which hitherto had been won by the townsmen was gradually hung with silver fetters, and instead of democracy there came forth an oligarchy.

The time when these changes were taking place was a period of wild confusion in the Netherlands. It was the time of the Hook and Codfish wars, and every town was full of the bitterest party-spirit, often of violent disorder. There were Hook parties and Codfish parties among the burghers; and even when the guilds were struggling for more power, they could not get men to accept the offices to which they were entitled to appoint men. The offices were both thankless and dangerous. At length, in 1472, they were declared compulsory; yet men still threatened to surrender their citizenship rather than accept them. But the guilds managed somehow, and one of their achievements, the burgomaster, remains, in some form, until this day.

From the earliest dawn of municipal government the Count's officers exercising authority in the town had naturally come to form a kind of municipal aristocracy. Belonging originally to the noble or well-born class, every such functionary, besides being in his own person a man of influence and standing, became by virtue of his office of schepen pre-eminently a heer—an untranslatable word, loosely, a lord or seigneur—and the children of such officials, in Dordrecht at least, became "heeren's sons."[2] The atmosphere of official dignity and importance still surrounded them after they had retired from office; the eminent townsmen thus favored with the confidence of the Count became in time a class apart, a recognized official aristocracy.

Between these eminent official townsmen, whether acting schepens and raadsmen or retired schepens and raadsmen, and the guilds, the keenest hostility existed, and the antagonism

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[1] *Van de Wall*, p. 753.

[2] Ibid. p. 30.

between them must have been increased by the money qualification which was now the *sine qua non* of town honors. There were many points on which the guilds had grievances. This new method of electing the Eight was one. Again, it does not precisely appear from existing documents whether the Eight, at their institution, were to have the exclusive right of electing the burgomaster, or whether the Old Raad was to have a share in the election; but in course of time the election was divided between them, and the idea rankled in the minds of the guilds that they and their representative Eightsmen had been robbed of a privilege by the Old Raad. Here was a source of lasting enmity against the Old Raad and all its class. The guilds, however, had obtained the right for the Eight of voting in the imposing of taxes. Old usurpation, even when the right usurped was lost, was magnified into old privileges, and the wrongs of the guilds became a theme for every demagogue among the guildsmen. In 1647 and 1652, the grievances of the guilds threw the town into uproar.

On its side also, the Old Raad grew and became a numerous and powerful body, overshadowing the small schepens' court (still with its nine schepens and five raadsmen, as when it first appeared in history under the Holland house), which was the door of entrance to it. It became an oligarchical and close brahminical caste, fenced about by the money qualifications already detailed, monopolizing all the lucrative offices in the town, and standing forth more and more, by its wealth, its culture, and practised experience as the representative organ of the town. On the one side stood this limited, refined, and highly educated, select, oligarchical body; on the other was the great, dense mass of the burghers, comprehending among them much bigotry and ignorance; while below the burghers was the non-burgher class, whose worst and most savage element was what the Dutch writers of the seventeenth century uniformly denominated the "*canaille*."

During the lordship of the Bavarian and Henegowen Counts, the towns of Holland had been summoned occasionally to send representatives to a common meeting-place to determine, along with the nobles of the countdom, as represent-

ing the rural districts, upon the Count's petitions for money. These meetings in later days came to receive the name of assemblies of the States of the Province. The Burgundian house, acting on its policy of strong centralization, carried the idea a step farther, and summoned representatives from its several provinces to one common meeting-place, thereby laying the foundation of those assemblies afterward designated States-General. We have no need for our purpose to trace these bodies through their successive stages of growth. The men who composed them were drawn from the nobles, and from the aristocratic official class of the towns—the class which in Dordrecht formed the Old Raad, and in other towns the Vroedschap, or, let us say, town council. This new honor served to widen the interval between the class which held its monopoly and the common guildsman, and thus the municipal aristocracy, as they gained in power, gained also in self-importance: the aristocracy became more aristocratic.

These assemblies had gradually lifted that class whose members had the privilege of being sent to them into a new range of ideas and a wider sphere of influence. Commerce had also helped to educate them; their horizon widened; they had to take a higher part than a mere municipal one in the business of their times. Converted by a natural process into statesmen, each generation of them destined its sons from their birth to be statesmen also. They were trained as statesmen, and taught to speak several of the leading languages of Europe. After the abjuration of Philip, they were sent as ambassadors to foreign courts; they took rank abroad among the nobles of Europe, and went on missions of war and peace to deliberate with monarchs themselves. In their own province, when the lordship of the Count was abolished, this educated, aristocratic class remained its virtual head, the directors of its policy and the dispensers of all power. In the towns they were sovereigns and masters, none questioning them, except by usurpation or violence, as to their doings. In Dordrecht, the municipal, educated, many-languaged gentry who composed the Old Raad, many of whom had been on official business at several of the courts of Europe, had become the actual

sovereigns of the town. As a sovereign power, they now sent deputies to deliberate with deputies from other sovereign towns of Holland on joint action for the common good. These deputies could not bind the sovereign oligarchy which sent them, without authority so to do. They had to report the matter, and take the decision of the ruling oligarchy. Thus Dordrecht, like all these Dutch towns, had grown to be a little independent republic, where the people had practically no power, or next to none: a republic governed by an educated brahminical caste, which held all the honors and lucrative offices of the town, whose members struggled for them, quarrelled about them, split up into parties and factions over them, hated each other in consequence of them, and stood separate and apart from their fellow-townsmen with something of the air of superior beings.

Chapter II.

DE WITT'S ANCESTRY AND BIRTH.

It was into this brahminical caste that John de Witt was born.

Some time before the end of the thirteenth century, there had settled in this town of Dordrecht a family of the name of die Witte, or, as it would have been called in England, White. Its origin and the correct date of its first connection with the town are unknown. The family genealogical tree begins in 1295 with Jan (or John) die Witte, of whom its sole record is that he was married and left a son. The same brief history is all that it bequeaths to us of the son and grandson. His great grandson, also a Jan die Witte, was, however, a man of some note in the town. He was frequently appointed schepen by the Count, and was also burgomaster in those very years when the Twelve, the Eight, and the Burgomaster of the Community were being born. He was thus contemporaneous with those commotions and causes which ended in the first inroad upon the Count's power. This Jan left four children. There had evidently been some thoughtfulness and earnestness in his family; for one son became a priest, his only daughter devoted herself also to a religious life, and the wife of his youngest son presented a missal to the cathedral of Dordrecht after her husband's death. Probably she had not been able to read; perhaps a priest coveted it; at any rate, it is still to be seen in the library of the town. Through Jan's youngest son and that youngest son's wife, who presented the missal, the family line was preserved. Their grandson became also, in his generation, a notable person in Dordrecht. He was elected several times to the office of raadsman, and in that capacity assisted the schepens in the administration of justice and the making of laws

for the town during the closing years of the fifteenth century. He was also one of the Forty. In his day the family name appears to undergo a change: it is no longer "die Witte," but "de Witte."

The grandson here spoken of had several children, all born two or three years before or after Luther. Among them, as among some of their ancestors, religious feeling seems to have run strong. Two of his sons became priors of monasteries not far from Dort, and a daughter became a nun in the convent of St. Agnes, situated within the town. One of the priors survived Luther, and must have heard something of the great conflict which had begun. Two other sons, who devoted themselves to municipal life, married, and with them the family line, hitherto to all appearances slender and undivided, split up into two great branches, which were to grow wider apart with each generation. The elder branch we drop from view, as we shall have no further connection with it. We may observe here that the family name makes with this generation a farther advance: it is not now "die Witte" nor "de Witte," but "de Witt."

The younger of these married brothers was head of the branch which produced John de Witt, and was, as we would say, John's great-great-grandfather. Twenty years of his ripe manhood were spent after the first of Luther's mighty thunder-peals were sounded through Germany; the new doctrines had even taken root in Dordrecht, but he clung to the Church which had drawn two of his brothers and his sister from the active world. His son (John's great-grandfather) died sixty years before John himself saw the light, and was undoubtedly also a Roman Catholic. He had been born in 1516, and lived on till 1565, and had had time enough to comprehend some of the bearings of Luther's work. He had travelled six years through France, Spain, and Portugal, to see the world before entering on municipal life. He had seen much; but he had not seen into this new thing which was abroad in it. He returned from his travels, married twice, became a raadsman and sat with the schepens, according to the custom of his patrician class, and was at last buried in the Roman Catholic

church where his father lay. John de Witt is sprung from the line of his first marriage, for his second wife had no children. When he married a second time, his children were all well grown-up; his second wife and eldest daughter by his first were born in the same year, and were thus of one age! A son of his, Cornelius (John's grandfather), was eighteen years old when the second marriage took place, and the new wife was only twenty-four. The second wife, like the first, was doubtless a Roman Catholic. The children of the earlier marriage must have been all brought up in the faith which their father and mother professed. It is beyond question that John's grandfather must have begun life as a Roman Catholic.

This grandfather Cornelius was the first in the direct ancestral line of John de Witt who was caught up in the wild, fiery tempest of the Reformation. His boyhood and youth were contemporaneous with the earlier atrocities of the reign of Philip and the opening struggle of the first William of Orange. As it grew in terriblencss, passing over the Netherlands in waves of scorching fire, the question came to him, as to others in those days—what side he would take in the struggle. The need of the times was, as the need of most times is, to be one thing or the other decidedly, and in his case that he should declare himself, once for all, either for Roman Catholicism and Philip with his butcheries, or for Protestantism and William of Orange. He, too, had travelled in his youth; he had seen France and Italy, and had looked into the world with better purpose and effect than his father had. As a lad he must have gone often out to see the burnings and drownings at Dordrecht, by which Philip and the Pope tried to extinguish the new faith. Judging from a portrait of him taken in riper manhood, he was a handsome youth, with ample, full forehead, and large, intelligent eyes.[1] To him, at some time in his fresh manhood, the question came. "No," we can imagine him answering: "there is something in this

[1] I am indebted for a sight of this portrait, and of the portraits of other members of the De Witt family, to Mr. Hoog, of Leyden, who is one of the representatives of the family.

new doctrine; these torturings, burnings, and drownings are not Divine work; there is more in this world than is to be seen through papal eyes." So he took the side of the Reformation, and wisely cast in his lot with it. Where he was when Dordrecht rose in 1572 and chased the priests out of the town, broke the images in the churches, and established the Reformed faith in it, we have not traced. He had been four years married then, and had one little daughter, whom John de Witt was afterward to know as Aunt Lydia. Three years after that triumph of the new doctrines in Dordrecht, we find him striking boldly into the troubled current of public life. Hitherto he had been too young to take part in it, as the law in Dordrecht would not allow a man to become a schepen, which was the first step in a public career, until he was thirty years of age. At the earliest age permissible by law he was appointed a schepen, from which we may infer that he was a man known and trusted by his townsmen, and one who had already taken his side. For nine years he went on filling various town offices, and at last became burgomaster of the community. Altogether, so far as we are able to reckon, he filled the office of burgomaster for eighteen years, at a time when the question of life or death between the Provinces and Spain was still in the balance. This repeated re-election to the chief civic responsibility, in a time of terrible struggle and anxiety, implies that he was a man of singular courage and capacity for business. The burnings and torturings he had not only protested against, but he was now devoting his life to keeping forever, out of his corner of the Netherlands, the power which practised them. He was likewise a man of integrity—true to his word. Once, namely, in 1576, when he was travelling on the business of the State to Gertruydenberg, he was made prisoner by some freebooters under the command of a Frenchman. He escaped with the aid of three fugitive Dort burghers, on each of whose heads a hundred thalers had been set, and who had joined the freebooting gang as a means of obtaining a living. When they landed him safely in Dordrecht, he paid them the hundred thalers he had bribed them with, and obtained the pardon he

had promised to procure for them from William of Orange. Fifty years of his life were spent in hard public work—such work as a legislator and statesman could give under the Dutch constitution, if we may so name it. John's two sisters must have sat on the old man's knee, or been dandled in his old heroic arms. John himself never saw him. The twelve years' truce was at an end, but the long struggle for freedom was not yet fought out; the flame and smoke of the battle were again around him, ascending higher and higher, spreading wider and wider, and dragging all Europe into its fiery issues, when he closed his eyes, and his interest in earthly things was at an end.[1]

The two sons who survived him devoted themselves also to political life. The elder (John's uncle) is described as a Doctor of Laws, and, after being pensionary of Dordrecht for a few months, was appointed "Land's Advocate" of Holland when that office became vacant by the arrest and execution of Oldenbarneveldt. He was Land's Advocate during the Synod of Dort, thus holding the office which John was afterward to fill under a different name. He soon passed, however, to an appointment in the court of Holland, and died while John was still a boy. The younger son, Jacob de Witt, was John's father, and he, in like manner, had begun to discharge municipal functions some years before his father's death. His father's distinguished career and long, faithful service to the State had raised the family to one of the highest points of influence in the town; and Jacob's way into public life, like his brother's, was smooth. Jacob, too, travelled in his youth and saw foreign lands. An official extract of the registry of his marriage, which we have seen in the possession of one of the family descendants,[2] describes him as a Doctor of Laws; and Balen, a contemporary townsman, gives him the same designation; but hostile pamphleteers, in the later portion of his long life of eighty-four years, hold him up to scorn as a bankrupt wood-merchant. The latter description may have been also

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[1] Balen's *Beschryving van Dordrecht*, p. 1318.

[2] It is in the possession of Mr. Hoog, of Leyden.

true. Jacob began his public official career at thirty years of age; was one of "The good men of the Eight;" then one of "The good men of the Forty;" next a schepen; then a deputy to the States of Holland; and, after many years, burgomaster of the community and ambassador to foreign countries, besides filling a roll of other public offices. Both Jacob and his brother must have inherited, in their youth, their father's attachment to the House of Orange. But Jacob's entrance into public life was contemporaneous with the execution of Oldenbarneveldt. He had then just turned thirty years of age, and was therefore old enough to form a judgment upon that work and the public events which had led to it. We do not know how it impressed him, for the history of his family is unwritten. All we know is that for the greater portion of the second thirty years of his life he placidly pursued the even tenor of his way, and quietly discharged the municipal and state functions which fell to his lot.[1] By the end of that period we find that he had become one of the most unbending opponents of the House of Orange. The same period is that in which the crushed Oldenbarneveldt party again raised its head, and became once more, under new circumstances, a living political power in the State. The influences which resuscitated it found sympathy with Jacob de Witt. We shall have to describe the growth and nature of these influences in a subsequent chapter. Circumstances will make Jacob a champion of the principles of the party, and we shall also see what his championship cost him.

A collection of family portraits is still extant.[2] Jacob is represented as a man of long features, with a prominent, straight nose, large eyes, and full, fleshy lips. His hair was between dark brown and black; and he wore a mustache, but no beard. His wife, Anna van de Corput, a daughter of a patrician family, was a pleasant, circular-faced, red-cheeked woman, with dark brown hair; but in neither father nor mother can be traced the lineaments of their famous son.

[1] Jacob de Witt, John's father, was born in 1589, and died in 1674, about nineteen months after John's murder.

[2] In the possession of Mr. Hoog, of Leyden.

They had three living children before John was born—two girls, Johanna and Maria, and a son, Cornelius (Cornelis, as they named him), the latter being John's senior by two years and three months. In Cornelius the face is long and tolerably narrow, and the nose prominent and somewhat hooked. In John (Johan was his Dutch name) the characteristic elements of Cornelius's features are carried a stage further—a face of great length and narrowness, and a nose monstrously hooked, surpassing Wellington's in this respect. His eyes are not large; they are rather small, and are brown in color. His hair was also dark brown, and his portrait, which was painted in the prime of his manhood, endues him with a slight mustache, but no beard.

The three elder children appear to have been born in Dordrecht, for their names are set down in the baptismal registers of the town. The registry of John's baptism, however, has been nowhere found. When entering himself in his youth as a student at the University of Leyden, he inscribed, in the column set apart for indicating the place of the student's birth, the word "Dordracenus." The circumstance proves nothing in favor of Dordrecht being the actual place of his birth. His father, in the year when John was born, was acting as a deputy from Dordrecht to the States of Holland, and had to spend much of his time at the Hague. Presuming that his wife may have been living temporarily at the Hague with him, it seemed not improbable that John might have been born there. Inquiries which we have made at the municipal archives of the Hague result only in this, that the baptismal registers of the town for that time have been accidentally burnt, and that the means of setting this point at rest do not exist there. About the day of his birth there need be no question: it is given in Balen, a contemporary genealogical authority, as September 24.[1] Balen gives the year as 1625; but according to John's own entry in the inscription-roll of

[1] See the genealogical tables appended to Balen's *Beschryving van Dordrecht*, in particular those of the De Witts; see, also, Ferwada's *Genealog. Wapen-book*, which probably owes some of its materials, as regards Dordrecht families, to Balen.

the University of Leyden, his birth-year should be 1623.[1] Perhaps a lucky accident some day may bring both the locality and the date to light. Until then the place of his birth, like the place of his burial, must remain unknown.[2]

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[1] MS. records of the University of Leyden preserved in the University. I am indebted for access to these manuscripts to the generous liberality of the University authorities.

[2] A painting of Dordrecht by Adam Willaers, 1629, when John was a child, is in the Dordrecht Museum. A red town, surrounded with walls, with several cannon looking over them. Red, and with its cathedral prominent at the one end, then as now.

Chapter III.

HIS EDUCATION AND TRAVELS.

From whatever source Jacob de Witt derived his income, whether in his earlier years from the practice of law, or, later, from trading in Baltic timber, or, supplementarily, from the emoluments derived from his municipal or state employments, he was a man in tolerably easy circumstances, but in no sense a moneyed man. Nothing about the character of the family life is known, and the years of the childhood and youth of John and his brother have been left a complete blank. We have not a single anecdote to give us a glimpse into the disposition of the boys, and scarcely a hint to show us where they were at any time, or what they were doing. It is more probable that their education began in some of the schools for children of the wealthier classes than that they were educated at home, as was sometimes the case. The method of education in children's schools was of the rudest and most unscientific kind. They were kept either by men or women, and many of the latter could not even read. Before the door, a pattern sheet, written by the master's own hand, had to be hung out, describing under a penalty what he was fit to teach, and, in addition, sometimes, a sign-board with the word "school" was exhibited, along with a painting representing the school-master himself in the midst of his pupils. Occasionally a rod and ferule were painted on the sign-board, with some appropriate motto, such as "cheap wisdom," etc. The middle and poorer kind of children's schools in the Dutch towns consisted generally of low, small apartments on the second story, with an outlook on a dirty lane or court-yard, and, sometimes, even, of a damp cellar. Frequently, in summer, the school was held in the street beneath the penthouse, and inside, in many cases, there were separate apartments for the

children of the richer and those of the poorer classes. At one side of the school-room stood the huge wooden chair of the master, and beside him lay the birch and ferule, which, throughout the Netherlands, in the seventeenth century, were singularly well applied as aids to learning and discipline. The Bible rested on a desk near. At the right side of the master's seat hung the alphabet, and, in the poorer schools, an iron comb (having a wooden handle), the latter being used both as a means of punishment and for another purpose which need not be indicated. On the left side was the dunce's shelf or table, where the stupid, lazy, or offending children were conspicuously posted. Behind his chair hung a ciphering board, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and specimens of the master's ornamental penmanship, along with the ordinances of the school, containing, in some cases, rules as to how the children must conduct themselves in the street and in church; as to how they must sit, rise, bow, and courtesy; that they should not shuffle with the feet, scratch themselves, etc.; that they must not blow their noses loudly; they must not sneeze or talk; and must not strike, kick, hurt, or slander one another.

During summer the school was opened at six o'clock in the morning, and during winter at seven, with prayer, either by the master or a pupil, the reading of a chapter of the Bible, and the singing of a psalm. It was closed at eleven, and resumed from one till four, and again from five till seven, when the day's work ended with prayer, Bible-reading, and the singing of a psalm. In winter the school was warmed by a turf fire, which stood in the middle of the floor; and after dark it was lighted with tallow-candles, stuck into blocks of wood or fixed in iron candlesticks. In the superior class of infant schools the children had to bring a turf daily, and a tallow-candle once a week. Oftentimes the school apartment served as a sleeping or sitting room, or kitchen; and frequently the mistress kept a small shop for the sale of dainties, which the children purchased. If she could not read, she merely drilled the children from memory in the alphabet, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed, until the children

could repeat them by heart, without having learned to read them. The books which were read by the more advanced children in the better class of schools, such as the De Witts would attend, were the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, histories of David and Joseph, the Proverbs of Solomon, the Common Letter-writer, Chronicle of Events in Holland, Zealand, and Friesland, and of the Bishops of Utrecht, the Dutch Wars, the Spanish Tyranny, the French Tyranny, etc. Writing and arithmetic were also taught.

It may be that the boys began their education in the Latin school of Dordrecht, which had been in existence for some centuries, and which had classes for the instruction of young children in the Dutch language. In 1635 it was one of the most famous in north-western Europe. The great repute of the learned men who conducted its higher classes drew students from all parts of France and Germany, and, in the year named, more than six hundred pupils were receiving education within its walls. The young De Witts unquestionably received their later school education there. The great linguistic need of the boys was instruction in Latin and French, as no progress in public life was possible without a thorough knowledge of these tongues. They may have had a French nurse; but, at any rate, the Netherlands abounded with French teachers of both sexes, most of whom had fled either from France or the Spanish Netherlands. All children of patrician families were instructed in both languages as thoroughly as the age permitted. German and English, however, were not so generally, or at least not so thoroughly, taught. Latin, Greek, philosophy, and mathematics, probably also French, and certainly singing, were taught to the pupils attending the Dordrecht seminary, of which, till John's thirteenth year, the rector, or head master, was Dr. Beekman, a man well known in his day in the Netherlands as a philosopher and mathematician, and a warm friend of Descartes.

Their friendship began in 1617, when Beekman was a resident in Breda, and while Descartes, then serving in the army of the Prince of Orange, was lying in garrison in the same town. On the corner of one of the streets of Breda a mathe-

matical problem in Dutch had been posted, and it had attracted the attention of a number of the passers-by. Among them was a young soldier of one-and-twenty, who, being unable to read Dutch, requested a member of the crowd beside him to translate it for him into French or Latin. The person addressed by the youthful soldier was the learned Beekman, then forty-seven years of age. The soldier was Descartes, who sent Beekman the solution of the problem. Thus the friendship began, and Beekman soon discovered that the young Descartes had much to teach even him in mathematics. Descartes led Beekman into a new line of mathematical thought, and on Beekman's transference to the rectorship of the Latin school of Dordrecht, he, without question, introduced there the Cartesian impulse. John, being only thirteen years of age when Beekman died, could not receive much of that impulse from Beekman himself. But it had begun, and if it was not continued in the school by Beekman's successor, it had been received by the cultivated society of the Netherlands, and the young De Witts speedily came within its reach.

It was customary in the Latin schools for the more distinguished boys to perform one or other of the dramas of Plautus, Terence, Seneca, or of modern Latin writers; and there is a possibility that the De Witts took part in some such performance.[1] The clergy did not view such representations with

[1] The materials for the preceding portion of this chapter have been derived from Dr. Schotel's *Oud-Hollandsch Huisgezin der seventiende Eeuw*, 1868, pp. 75–110. In this work, p. 107, Dr. Schotel, speaking of the performance of these plays, says: "Generally the best scholars filled the parts, and among them we meet the brothers De Witt at Dordrecht. The poet, Conrad Droste, saw one of them there take a part in the *Troades* of Seneca." The same author, in his *Letter en Oudheidkundige Avondstonden* (1841), p. 134, quotes from a MS. poem of Droste several lines which he attributes to the beginning of 1660. I have not seen this MS., but if the year is correctly given, it could not be either of the brothers De Witt that Droste saw. Droste says that he saw "De Witt's son, young and tender," in the part of Astyanax in Seneca's tragedy. Cornelius at this time had a son six years of age, for whom the part and the description would be applicable. John was already the most powerful man in the Republic. Dr. Schotel throws further light on the date by a reference to the rector (Schalken) under whom this representation took place. Schalken was not rector during Cornelius and John's attendance at the Latin school. The statement in the *Oud-Hollandsch Huisgezin* is, therefore, incorrect.

favor, which, however, were rooted in the educational mode of the times, and could not be suppressed. They were still more opposed to dancing, describing dancing-schools as "devil's and soul-destroying schools;" but dancing was fashionable and popular, and the young De Witts were taught to dance, like most other children in their rank of life.

Equipped with what knowledge of Latin and Greek authors, of French, mathematics, and history, the course of study at the Latin school imparted, the two boys went to the University of Leyden, inscribing themselves as students on October 24, 1641.[1] They were two out of 446 students who matriculated the same year for the first time. Twenty of these were inscribed gratis, the rest paid a small inscription fee of 1*s.* 3*d.* each. The fee is now ten guilders, not quite a pound sterling. In the album of the university, Cornelius inscribed himself as twenty years of age, and John as eighteen; but, according to Balen, they were eighteen and sixteen respectively.[2] As recorded in the matriculation lists of the university the brothers were boarded with "Bernard Schotanus" (Latinized from Schoten), one of the professors of law, from which we see that they were to undergo training for official life.

In the University of Leyden at that time there were five faculties—the Juridica, Litteraria, Theologica, Medica, and Philosophica; and the work of each faculty was divided into several branches, which were lectured upon by separate professors. Professor Schoten, a Frisian by birth, had been originally a professor of law at Franeker, and afterward at Utrecht. He was not a man of such eminence that the curators of the Leyden University fixed their thoughts first upon him, when one of their chairs of law became vacant. He was not invited to the chair until efforts to obtain more eminent men from

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[1] MS. records of the University of Leyden. The inscribing of Cornelius runs thus: "Octr. 24, 1641, Cornelius de Witt, Dordracenus, an. 20; Stud. Jur. habit. apud Cl. D.D. Scotanum Juris Professor Primarius." John's is in these terms: "Octr. 24, 1641, Johannes de Witt, Dordracenus, an. 18; Stud. Jur. habit. eundem."

[2] MS. records of the University of Leyden, preserved in the university. There is no reason why we should accept Balen's statement in preference to their own.

Geneva and Bremen (which spread over nearly two years) had failed, and he had just joined the university when the two De Witts entered as students.[1] Names better known to us in England are those of Salmasius and Boxhorn, who filled the chairs of the classical languages and literature. Salmasius had been already for nine years seated in the chair of Greek and Latin, and had a great reputation as a scholar. He would be unremembered now by Englishmen, save that he shines by the light which Milton has thrown upon him.

No means exist of ascertaining the effect of the university training on the two brothers. The registers do not show what curriculum they went through. All we can say of them is, that they remained at the university for four years, and studied law. John also prosecuted his studies in mathematics. They left Leyden in 1645, without having taken a degree in law. This their father intended they should take at a French university, in the course of those travels which they were now to begin, and which were considered the complement of the education of every youth belonging to the patrician class in the Netherlands in the days of which we write.

On October 14, 1645, the two brothers set out from Dordrecht on their travels.[2] Their mother had died in the beginning of the same year,[3] and their father had only been a fortnight back from an extraordinary embassy to Sweden and Denmark, on which he had been sent in the year preceding.[4] Their sisters, Johanna and Maria, had been long married — both of them before Cornelius and John began their univer-

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[1] Further information will be found about him in Onomast. *Liter. van Saxe*, P. iv. p. 240; Vriemoet, *Athenæ Frisiacæ*, p. 226; and the *Oratio de claris Frisiæ Jureconsultis*, van den Groningen Professor G. de Wal, pp. 47 and 219. Matthijs Siegenbeek, in his *Geschiedenis der Leidsche Hoogeschool*, 1829—a poor book, which gives us no information about the intellectual life or history of the university—describes him as "Professor primarius Codicis." The curators had been looking out for a fitting professor for upward of two years before they offered the chair to Schotanus.

[2] MS., John's journal of the tour of Cornelius and himself, in the possession of Mr. Hoog, of Leyden, to whom I am indebted for a perusal of it.

[3] Balen's genealogical tables, in his *Beschryving van Dordrecht*, already cited.

[4] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat en Oorlog*, iii. folio 18.

sity course — and were settled in Dordrecht. The line of the De Witts had latterly become very prolific, and the young men were surrounded with a multitude of uncles, aunts, and cousins, of nearly all of whom we shall hear nothing more in this history.

Their travels lasted twenty-one months. John has left behind him a journal of their tour, and an account, to the minutest stiver, of their outlay. The journal is meagre, and of the poorest quality, being, in fact, a series of rough and skeleton jottings; and it affords no insight into the nature of his mind, or into the character of his culture, at this time — rather, we should say, what insight it gives is negative and adverse. The young men appear to have gone faithfully to see any of the remarkable or curious sights of the towns they visited, and occasionally to places of amusement. Passing through Antwerp, across the Spanish Netherlands, they spent twelve days on their way to Paris, and, after a fortnight's residence there, set out for Angers. At Angers they sojourned during the winter of 1645, '6, and they took their degree of doctor of laws at its university.

"*Novr.* 20. Arrived at Angers. Put up first at the 'White Horse,' and thereafter lodged in the boarding-house of Mons. Besson, and dwelt there three months."

Nothing in this short entry about the business which had taken them almost direct from Dort to Angers, with the briefest pause on the way, at Paris. John did not consider that he had commenced his "tour" until the Angers business was disposed of, as is shown by the very next entry in his journal:

"*Feby.* 21. Having provided ourselves with horses, we began the great tour."

The items of expenditure in John's accounts are neither dated nor classified, but among the money spent at Angers[1] is the following entry:

"To the rector, for our degree, 102" guldens.

[1] MS. Journal, *verteert te Angers.*

Leaving Angers, they travelled over the west and south of France, zigzagging their way all through Poitou, Guienne, Languedoc, and Provence. In the list of expenses we find small items like these: "At the comedy, 8" stivers; "to the barber, 10" stivers; "at games at cards, 10" stivers; "gloves, 1" gulden; "for a new year to our servant, 2 guldens 2 stivers;" and in these little things we may note the exact and orderly habits of John's mind. At Montpellier they "fell in with very good company, and remained for a time," namely, during May and June. The autumn was spent in visiting Arles, Marseilles, Toulon, and other places; and, early in October, 1646, they returned to Paris, where they remained nearly six months.

By the end of March, 1647, they were again upon their travels, slowly making their way hither and thither, toward Calais, from whence they sailed for England on June 3 (May 25, by the English calendar). The part of their diary chronicling their visit to England is as unfruitful as the earlier portion. The young statesman, at this time about twenty-four years of age,[1] does not utter a word about the impressions which the mighty doings that were shaking England's being to its centre made upon his mind. He spent two months in this country, and they were months big with momentous events. Almost at that moment when he was setting his foot on English ground at Dover, and working his way through Cantelberg (as he names Canterbury), Rochester, and Gravesend for London, the army snatched the King out of the hands of the Commissioners of Parliament, and began that march on London which was to throw the City into consternation. Nevertheless, John chronicles as follows:

"Arrived at London, and put up at the 'Globe.' Saw both the Houses of Parliament, the tombs at Westminster, the Tower, with the animals, and the beautiful tapestry."

And so on in the same vein. It may be taken for granted that he brought letters with him to the Dutch ambassador in

[1] Adopting his own entry in the registers of the University of Leyden, and not Balen's date.

London, old Joachimi, who had spent the most of his life as the accredited representative of the States-General at the English court. At least, we find the aged gentleman, now eighty-seven years of age, paying the young men courteous attentions; and we may believe that he took some trouble to explain to the two scions of a patrician family as much of the character of the great Puritan movement as he himself understood. John must have heard the character and phases of this great English war canvassed in Leyden. He had probably smoked many a pipe of tobacco[1] (for that habit he also acquired) over it with his fellow-students; he must have heard Orange professors descanting upon it, and fiery denunciations of it from the Dutch pulpit. It is, however, certain enough that neither old Joachimi's elucidations nor the conversation of certain Dutch merchants resident in London, with whom he and his brother associated when in England, quite made him comprehend the movement, or the one mighty man who was the soul and strength of it, as we shall find in the opening years of his Grand Pensionaryship, when his own Republic was in the throes of the first naval war with England. It happened that, during these very weeks when he was living in England, the Puritan question stood in a position that permitted any sharp-eyed foreigner to get readily into the heart of it. The Royalists had been beaten everywhere, and the conquerors were themselves splitting up into two conflicting, irreconcilable parties. Presbyterianism sat in Parliament talking, and voting a new spiritual tyranny, and away on Triploe Heath, near Cambridge, lay the flower of Puritanism, the flower of all that was best in England, 21,000 strong, armed to the teeth, and with a settled purpose in the heart of every man of them. One tyranny had been overthrown; a new tyranny was establishing itself in Westminster, and on Triploe Heath England's valor was maintaining the rights of individual conscience, as well as demanding pay for its heroic deeds, and was threatening to swoop down upon the alarmed metropolis.

[1] A tobacco-box of John's is still preserved. When I saw it, it was the property of the Rev. Dr. Schotel, of Leyden.

We do not know whether the advance of the army on London hastened John's departure from it; but on June 14, four days after the army began its march, we find him leaving London, and the following is recorded:

"*June* 14. Began a small tour through the country, in company with Mons. Raal, of Amsterdam, and Mons. Peter van der Mersch, merchant in London, and rode out in the evening, spending the night at Kingston—ten miles.

"*June* 15. Saw the King's house at Hampton Court—one mile; and spent the night at Windsor, where we remained over Sunday.

"*June* 17. Stayed at Basingstoke, and saw in passing the ruins of Basing House" (which Oliver had battered), "and spent the night at Laverstoke, at the house of Sir Robert Beulis"[1] (Bowles), "member of the Lower House.

"*June* 18. Dined there; and in the evening at Salisbury. Saw on the way Stonehenge, a place where a great many large stones, very old, are standing in the ground; with some others laid across, above them;[2] and met here a gentleman named Mr. Houw[3] (Howe), who resided at Wisfort, close by, along with another of this town, named Major Nicholas.

"*June* 19. At the request of Mr. Houw, rode out with him to his house at Wisfort, where his nobleness provided us with much sport, taking us out to a deer-hunt. We remained there the whole of the next day, and departed on

"*June* 21, About the evening, to Warminster."

From Warminster the brothers went to Bristol; from Bristol to Bath, where John "had a bath three times;" and thence to Chippenham, Calne, and Marlborough (Malborich, as he spells it), where he again met Major Nicholas, with whom the brothers spent several days in hunting. In the beginning of July (the date not further indicated) the brothers—

"Depart from Marlborough to Sir John St. John's, a gentleman dwell-

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[1] I have been unable to identify this name.

[2] MS. Journal. "Sagen onder wege Stonehenge, een plaetse daer seer veel groote steenen overoudt in de aerde staen, met eenige ander dwars daer boven overgelegt."

[3] Great Wishford, which De Witt, in the same passage, names Wisfort, originally belonged to the Bonhams, and subsequently passed to the Grobhams. Sir R. Grobham died in 1628, and his sister Joane succeeded to the property. She married John Howe, of Compton, Gloucestershire, from which marriage the property of Great Wishford devolved to the family of the Howes.

ing at the mansion at Lidiart,[1] who showed us much courtesy, and we shot a stag in his park.

"*July* 4. Came in the evening to Lechlade, where a gentleman, Sir Robert Raites, took us out of the hotel, and caused us to stay at his house, as we had presented him with the deer which we had shot at Lidiart."

John then chronicles his visit to Oxford.

"*July* 5. Arrived in the evening at Oxford, where we saw almost all the colleges, and the library, which is very beautiful; were shown a piece of the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was changed, Joseph's coat, which Joseph's brothers dipped in blood, and carried to his father when they had sold him, and many other curiosities."[2]

They had two clear days' sight-seeing in Oxford, setting out from it on the 8th, and reaching London, *via* Wallingford and Maidenhead, on the 10th, of July. In London their fellow-traveller, Mr. Van der Mersch, "obliged them to take up their residence at his house."

On the 15th of July (the 5th by the English reckoning) the old ambassador Joachimi took them to Reading, where he had an interview with Fairfax, and also with the King.

"*July* 15. Rode out with the ambassador Joachimi to the King, who was at a gentleman's house, a mile and a half from Reading, and spent the night at Maidenhead" (on the way out).

The following day's entry in John's diary is so confusedly expressed that some educated Dutchmen, to whom we have submitted it, are unable to determine whether the De Witts were present at the audience with Charles or not.[3] The probabilities are all against their being admitted to the royal presence. It runs in the original thus:

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[1] Lidiard-Tregoz, then the property of Sir John St. John, who inherited it from his uncle Sir Oliver; and now the property of Lord Bolingbroke, their descendant.

[2] MS. Journal. "Wert vertoont een stuck van den soudt pilaer in den welken Loth's vrouwe veranders is, den rock van Joseph, die syne broeders bebloet, aan syn vader weder brachten als sij hem vercocht hadden, en meer andere rariteyten."

[3] See Whitelock's *Memorials of English Affairs* (ed. 1732), p. 256, '7. On $\frac{\text{June 29,}}{\text{July 9,}}$ the two Houses granted a pass "to the Dutch ambassador to go to the King, and so to return home." The King was then at Hatfield. On July $\frac{2}{12}$ the King "went to Windsor for two or three days, to see his children." On July $\frac{3}{13}$ "the King returned from Windsor to Cansham, the Lord Craven's House near Reading." On the $\frac{6}{16}$th the interview referred to took place.

"16 Quamen vroech te Reddich, alwaer syn Ex. Thomas Fairfax begroeten ende vercreech dien selven dach audiencie by den conink alwaer terstondt, naer den middach henen reden, ende wierden syn Ex. van de Commissarissen van het Parliment die by den koninck waren onthaelt ende boven geleijt; de audientie gedaen synde, syn weder gereden nae Redding alwaer syne Ex. heeft wesen begroeten de gedeputeerden van het Parliment om met de armee te handelen, en syn des avonts wedergecomen te Madenhadt."[1]

This brief approach to royalty in misfortune being ended, John and his brother returned to London, to enjoy for another week the hospitality of Van der Mersch, and on July 23 they were at Gravesend, on their way home to Dordrecht.

Yet twenty years more, in the same summer months of June and July, and one of these young men—Cornelius—will be again in the Thames; but it will be at the head of a Dutch fleet, with a stout Dutch admiral to do his bidding. What will it avail though Monk then posts down to Gravesend "in his shirt?" It will not frustrate the command of Cornelius to burn the English ships. Who in England can hinder him? Has not an easy-going king been dawdling away his time among his mistresses? Have not the English ships mutinied for want of pay, English sailors even fighting on Dutch ships, and shouting to their countrymen, "We fought for tickets before, but now we fight for dollars?" Do not the English ships lie in the Medway all dismantled and ready to be burnt? Great Elizabeth sleeps in Westminster; Oliver's skeleton has been hanging at Tyburn, and his heroic army has all melted away. Blake's embalmed body has been dragged from its vault, and cast into a pit to rot in Abbey Yard. A glorious Restoration has given us Charles, and Charles is thinking, as the Dutch fleet approaches, of running away to Windsor for safety!

[1] The best guess at the meaning of this passage which I have been able to obtain translates it thus: "We came early to Reading, where his Excellency (Joachimi) saluted Sir Thomas Fairfax, and he received the same day audience from the King, to whom immediately after mid-day we rode away, and his Excellency (Joachimi) was received by the Commissioners of the Parliament, who were with the King, and was led up-stairs; the audience being over, we again rode to Reading, where his Excellency (Joachimi) has been to salute the deputies of the Parliament appointed to treat with the army; and we returned in the evening to Maidenhead."

Chapter IV.

WHILE PRACTISING LAW IN THE HAGUE.

John and his brother returned to Dordrecht in the summer of 1647. Their French degree of Doctor of Laws entitled them to be admitted as advocates before the courts of Holland, and we find Cornelius taking the oaths on October 8, and John on November 11, of that year. We lose sight again of the whole family till March 7 following, before which time, however, John had taken up his residence at the Hague, and commenced practice as an advocate. In March, we find him residing in the house of one of the leading barristers of the day, probably supplementing his theoretical knowledge of law by the study of its practice under an eminent member of the profession. In the same year Cornelius, now old enough for the office, is appointed a schepen in his native town, and as such will administer justice in the schepens' court. He has thus taken the first step in official and public life. The burgomaster's office is still far ahead of him: he cannot become burgomaster till he is forty years of age.

During 1648 and 1649, John must shine upon us merely by borrowed light. We have no letters written by him in these years, and only a few are extant which had been sent him by his friends.[1] With the practice of law he is carrying on mathematical studies, as the following letter to him—the oldest in existence—from one of his uncles shows:

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[1] The only means of knowledge of this period of De Witt's life are to be found in the MS. letters to and from him, which are preserved in the Hague archives. In 1648 nine letters addressed to John are extant; and in 1649 there are fourteen. There are no letters from him during these years. In 1650 there are sixteen letters to him, and drafts of thirteen letters written by him. The earliest extant letter to John is dated March 7, 1648; and the earliest extant draft of a letter from him is dated January 19, 1650.

"I have received your welcome letter of the 4th instant, and am pleased to understand from it that, although the chief study of your nobleness is the practice of pleading, noble mathematics is not completely neglected, the evidence thereof being the four problems which you send me geometrically solved according to the manner of Descartes. I have run over them once, and hope to consider them again. . . . I see that Stampioen is again proposing new mathematical questions to amateurs, provided the copies thereof are publicly sold. I doubt not but M. Descartes will get a copy of them; nevertheless I have handed one of the two which your nobleness has sent me to M. Colume, in order that he may lay the same before Descartes."[1]

It is probable that in these years, when, perhaps, he was not oppressed with too much professional business, the greater portion of a mathematical work, which was not published till later, was composed by John.[2] Besides the jurist Schoten, with whom he had resided in Leyden, another Schoten occupied, during his university career, the chair of mathematics. The latter was succeeded by his son, who was an ardent exponent of Descartes's method. This son published, in 1658, a collection of mathematical works by himself and others, and it includes a Latin treatise by De Witt, extending over 190 pages, entitled *Elementa Curvarum Linearum*.[3]

There appeared also in 1648, under the name of *Horace en Curiace*, a translation into Dutch verse of Corneille's *Horace*, which has been attributed, without sufficient evidence, to John.[4] Unfortunately for accuracy here, there were in those

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[1] MS. letter, Anthony Vivien to John de Witt, March 7, 1647, '8. *Hague Archives.*

[2] De Kok says that the book was published in 1650; but the earliest edition I have been able to find was published in 1658. See De Kok's *Woordenboek.*

[3] De Witt's dedication to Dr. Schoten is dated the Hague, "Com. VIII. Octob. anni MDCLVIII. Cumque eorum, quae antehac, dum per otium licuit, eo spectantia meditatus sum, tu nunc, amicissime Schootene, copiam tibi fieri desideres, en, quantum in me est, desiderio tuo satisfacio, quaeque de eodem argumento a me quondam conscripta ac pene in ordinem redacta inveni, jam tibi mitto, tuique omnino juris facio, caetera autem, quae sparsim tantum annotata sunt, si modo graviora id ferent negotia, recolligam, debitoque ordine conjungam; recollecta atque ordinata suo quoque tempore tibi missurus. Vale."

[4] Huydecoper, *Proeve van Taalen Dichtkunde*, 1730, assigns this translation to John de Witt, but he does not seem to be aware there were others of his name; Geysbeek's *Anthol. Biogr. Critisch. Woordenboek*, Deel IV. 539, adopts the same view, which is also followed by Van Kampen. But Bilderdyk in his *History*, Deel

days several John de Witts; and one of them, John's cousin, and belonging to Dordrecht, had a literary instinct within him. The authorship is a mere calculation of probabilities, or a balance of conjectures, and there is no certainty the one way or the other. The same remark applies to certain love-poems published about this period and attributed to John, but with which, notwithstanding diligent inquiry, we are only familiar through a notice of them in the pages of Scheltema. Some of the pamphlets which appeared from the side of his party after his murder speak of his poetical gifts. It was a fashion of the times for cultivated people in Holland to write verse. Among the educated class in Dordrecht there were many, both men and women, who frequently versified. The painting of a portrait, the execution of an engraving or of a bust, called forth from some friend a versified tribute of admiration or affection. John's own father, before the close of his long life, and some time after John's murder, published a volume of poems; and John himself may have occasionally rhymed. History, however, knows nothing authentic about his doings in this direction, and the point needs no further comment.

During his residence in the Hague his sisters are seen to be taking the kindliest interest in him, and executing for him many pleasant sisterly offices. On July 18, 1648, Maria, the younger sister, was thus supplying him with some articles of apparel:

"VERY DEAR AND WORTHY BROTHER,—I have received your nobleness's pleasant letter, and I have thought it well to send you the little wrist-frills, as they were done eight days ago; but I have not been able, until this mid-day, to get the knee-frills,[1] so that I am compelled to send them unwashed, lest your nobleness should be in need of the wrist-frills. Sister Swyndrecht is, God be praised, again well. She had for six or eight

IX. p. 134, and Professor Tydeman in his *Notes* thereon, p. 265, attribute it to De Witt's cousin, John. See *Navorscher*, Deel IV. p. 134, and Deel V. p. 18; also Deel XIII. p. 180, in which last reference Van Lennep ascribes it to De Witt himself. Compare also Scheltema, *Mengelwerk*, III. p. 119.

[1] "*Canons*" is the word Maria uses. The expression will be familiar to readers of Molière, *Le Misan.* II. i.; *Ec. des Maris*, I. i.; and *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, sc. x. It is also met with in the English literature of the seventeenth century, under the form of "canions."

days a great pain in the right side. . . . We expect my brother in the beginning of next week; he has been nearly a fortnight away now.

"Very dear and worthy brother, your nobleness's wholly affectionate sister, MARIA DE WITT."

The following from Cornelius enables us to imagine John going about the Hague in a mantle and buttons, and in shoes of English leather. Perhaps he has a boy-servant at home who can do a little tailoring for him when it is wanted.

"MONSIEUR AND BROTHER,—I send a piece of cloth from my coat. I request your nobleness to be pleased to find out whether the color can be matched, and, if so, to get made for me a double mantle, with buttons like your own. I see little appearance of getting a youth here as a servant for myself, and I request that you will be pleased to make inquiries in the Hague. I will, however, rather wait some days in the hope of obtaining a sharp and civil youth."

Again, on September 19, 1648:

"I sent your nobleness a piece of cloth, requesting your nobleness to let me know with the first opportunity if you received it. I shall cause my coat (cleet) to be made here, before I go to the marriage. I request that your nobleness will cause a pair of English leather boots to be made for me. I doubt not but the shoemaker will still know the measure; and the same must be ready by next Thursday without fail, as I understand that I am to be invited to M. Looten's marriage; and it would also be satisfactory if you could get a servant for me by that time."

And, further, of two days' later date:

"Your nobleness's letter has been handed to me. I have caused one coat (cleet) to be made of another (rock) here [in Dordrecht]. I hope that on coming to the Hague I shall find the mantle made. You write about a youth who cannot tailor. This is not of great consequence to me, as, according to your opinion, he is clever otherwise. I would rather, however, that he could tailor a little."[1]

There are letters, also, from sister Johanna, wife of the lord of Swyndrecht already mentioned. Mark well this clear-spirited, practical woman. She is to exercise, during the next few years, a constant watchfulness over John's domestic concerns; and by-and-by, in the closing chapter of his life, she

[1] MS. Letters of September 17, 19, and 21, 1648, Cornelius to John. *Hague Archives.*

has one day of horror before her; but she has a heroism within her which will carry her through it with noble and intrepid strength.

She writes to her "worthy and much beloved brother," requesting that

"Your nobleness will take the trouble to purchase for my dear husband a gold hat-band, to be worn along with a gilt-buttoned coat (cleet) of the newest fashion, and such as your nobleness would approve of, if it were for yourself. The coat is ready; and as my dear husband would like to put it on as soon as possible, it would be well that the hat-band should be sent at the earliest opportunity. I should also like you to send an ell and three-eighths of gold bone-lace for the facings of the said coat, large and imposing, such as one now must use, and such as shall best please your nobleness."[1]

On September 30, 1649, Johanna is writing to him on a more serious subject. The letter shows that the De Witt family by no means considers John permanently located in the Hague, and that he is only waiting for some lucky windfall to enable him also to strike into public life. John has evidently been writing to his sister for a certificate of his membership in one of the churches of Dort. She replies:

"I have received your welcome letter of the 26th instant, and have spoken to De Wassenburg, who raised difficulties about granting an attestation without the same being first published before the congregation. I told him that your nobleness had not entirely removed from Dort, but that, being sometimes here, you would communicate; and, therefore, that your name should not be struck out of the church books, and that you should be merely considered as sojourning for a time out of the town. This explanation he accepted, and he gave me the accompanying attestation, on condition that your nobleness should remain a member of the church here also, which I thought was prudent, as otherwise, if your nobleness should again come here, you would require a new attestation from the Hague."[1]

In November, 1649, Cornelius was again in difficulties with his man-servant, who had turned out to be a thief, and John was once more commissioned to inquire after a fitting attend-

[1] MS., February 26, 1649. *Hague Archives.*
[2] MS., September 30, 1648, '9. *Hague Archives.*

ant. The following letters from Johanna further show the kindly offices which John was called upon to discharge for the Dordrecht members of the family, and will help us to see the process of education which was carried on therein:

(Without address or date, but probably February, 1649, '50.)

"Beloved Brother,—I wrote the day before yesterday to Aunt de Veer concerning a woman and a French maid, of whom her nobleness had written to me. . . . But I have written that if her nobleness is pleased with the maid, and gets a good character of her, she may hire her for me. If anything is done, I request that you will be pleased to advise me by a note; and herewith, I remain, your nobleness's obedient sister,

"Johanna de Witt."

"Dordrecht, the 14th (February?).

"Worthy and much beloved Brother, — I wrote you that I was desirous of getting a French maid. I have understood through my brother De Witt" (Cornelius) "that your nobleness has spoken with Aunt and Cousin de Veer on the subject, but that they do not know of any one. At present Miss Kletsert is here, and has spoken to me about a French girl who has come from France, but does not know Dutch, and who says that she has always gone about with children. I have requested her nobleness at once to make inquiries after the girl's fidelity and trustworthiness, and to hire her for me if she gives good evidence thereof. She is from Rouen. I said, if she had not a good accent, that she would not suit me, but Miss Kletsert said she could not judge of that. I would very much like you or some one else to see and speak with her before her nobleness hires her. I have to ask you to take the trouble to go to Miss Kletsert: her nobleness will send you word when the maid will be at her house. If your nobleness judges that she will not suit me, or that her evidence of character is not sufficient, be pleased not to engage her."

John, with that promptness which characterized him through life, at once saw the girl, and reported upon her. The following letter from Johanna, acknowledging one from him (not extant) of February 17, 1649, '50, lets us see a little into both brother and sister:

"February 18, 1650.

"Sir and worthy Brother, — I learn with astonishment that the French maid is of such bad breeding; as Miss Kletser said that appearances should not always break a bargain. Now, if she were good-looking or ugly, it would make to me very little difference; but I learn from your nobleness's letter only, that she, without or contrary to reason, gets out

of temper, and that she cannot be restrained, though she, nevertheless, was with people who in every way deserved to have respect shown them—from which I judge that she must have a bad temper and no great judgment; and both temper and judgment are, indeed, necessary in one who has to instruct children—viz., reasonable judgment and good patience. I should also very much like one who is somewhat civil and kindly in speech and manner, because examples teach best; and I think that this person cannot be well endowed therewith, since your nobleness writes that, according to your nobleness's judgment, she appears to have been keeping company with objectionable women; therefore I think it best that she should not be longer kept in suspense, and that you should say to Miss Kletscher[1] that I fear the girl is somewhat over-hasty in the head for me, thanking her nobleness for the trouble she has taken, and requesting that, if her nobleness falls in with another, she will be pleased to let your nobleness at once know, in order that your nobleness may inform me by a note. . . . A Papist would not be like us, and my dear husband would not willingly have a Popish maid in his house."[2]

The extreme courteousness which characterizes this correspondence cannot have escaped notice. It belongs to all the Dutch correspondence between people of the same rank in that time, and is not without a certain degree of formality and stiffness. The very children of these patrician families are invariably styled "your nobleness" from their earliest years, even by their parents. But, for a biography of De Witt, the letters from which we have been quoting have almost no value. He remains, after we have perused them all, a vague and dim shadow on the far horizon. No incident has been bequeathed to us by which we may see him and his individuality, even for a moment. We are merely conscious of a presence unseen, which we cannot delineate or define.

Leaving him in the Hague during the years 1648, 1649, and 1650, to the practice of law, the study of mathematics, and the execution of friendly offices for his friends in Dort, we turn to look at the political and social environment in which he dwelt, in order to ascertain the sources of his political creed, and to see what his age did for him, and what he owed his age.

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[1] I retain Johanna's different modes of spelling this name.

[2] MS. *Hague Archives.*

BOOK II.

Sources and Origin of De Witt's Political Creed.

Chapter I.

HIS POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT.

The three years from the close of 1647 to the close of 1650 we are disposed to regard as those in which his political education was accomplished and his political creed was formed. Government and society were almost rent to pieces before his eyes. The political problems of the time were argued out in every household and social circle, from the highest to the lowest. The discussion of them in the States-General was incessant and violent. At the table of Van Andel (the advocate under whose guidance John was beginning his practice of law, and with whom he boarded); among his professional brethren in the law courts; with his friends of Dordrecht deputed to attend the States of Holland; and, in short, wherever he turned; from the press in shoals of pamphlets, in church and market-place, in every wagon and canal-boat which he entered, he must have heard them discussed. Every man's mind was possessed with them. No one could live through these three years at the Hague, however much his mind might be a political blank at entering upon them, without emerging from them with definite ideas one way or the other. At the commencement of these years, De Witt is an utterly unknown political quantity; at their close, he issues from them with the lines of his political faith clearly and irrevocably fixed.

The questions which stirred all men's hearts during these three years, into which De Witt's penetrating eyes could not avoid looking, and which, as a member of the cultivated society of his age, he would be daily called upon to discuss—which really were to be the means of his political education—were these:

1. The peace of Münster, and the break-up of the alliance with France.

2. The attitude toward England.
3. The nature of the union between the Provinces, and the struggle with the Prince of Orange.

By examining these, we shall see the level at which the thought of the Republic stood before he entered on public life, and be prepared for examining, when the time comes, how much of his creed he inherited and absorbed, and how much of it he originated.

§ 1. *The Peace of Münster, and the Break-up of the French Alliance.*

Richelieu, in reviving the policy of Henry IV., and allying France with those powers which stood arrayed against Spain and Austria, had lent friendly aid to the Dutch in their struggle with Spain. From 1624 till his death in 1642, the two countries had stood in the closest bonds of friendship. He had fed the Dutch exchequer with annual but irregularly paid subsidies, varying from £200,000 to £230,000 sterling a year, on a condition agreed to by the Dutch that they were not to conclude a peace or truce with Spain without the "knowledge," "advice," or "intervention" of France.[1] The Dutch were not bound to accept the advice of France, and were, therefore, practically free to close the war when they pleased. On this footing the treaty arrangements stood till 1634, when a new element was introduced, whereby the States-General bound themselves for seven years (1634–'41), in the event of France throwing an army into the field, not to conclude a peace or truce except "conjointly and with consent" of France.[2] By this treaty, whenever Richelieu chose to throw himself into the war, the Dutch cause was tied to French interests or ambition.

This new element was not the work, however, of Richelieu, it was the doing of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange and his henchman Aerssens of Sommersdyke,[3] an old and bitter

[1] See Treaties with France, 1624. "Sans l'advis et intervention," Aitzema's *Vredehandeling*, p. 12; and treaty of 1630, "Sans l'advis," ib. p. 61.

[2] Treaty with France of April, 1634, §§ 4 and 11. Aitzema's *Vredehandeling*, p. 98.

[3] *Orange Archives:* see the correspondence in reference to the treaties of 1634 and 1635, in second series, vol. iii., during the years referred to.

enemy and lampooner of Oldenbarneveldt. Spain, that its action might be freer in other quarters, had been proposing to the Dutch not peace, but a mere truce; and a powerful truce party had already grown up in Holland. The Prince and Aerssens, believing that the object of Spain was to divide and beat its enemies in detail, strongly resisted the Spanish offer of a truce. In this they were aided by Richelieu's ambassadors in the Hague, who eagerly countermined all the efforts of Spain. The result was the obligation, already mentioned, to bind up the Dutch interests with France for seven years, if France would take part in the war; but the obligation was undertaken against the protest of Amsterdam, Dordrecht, Rotterdam, and Alkmaar, in the States of Holland, who declared it to be a "sacrifice of the freedom and sovereignty of the country." Even already they were becoming afraid of the growth of France.[1]

Whether the undertaking of such an obligation was wise or not (with which we have here nothing to do),[2] one thing is certain, that it was right on the Prince and Aerssen's part to crush the truce party, and, if possible, to bring France to act on the rear of the Spanish Netherlands. The obligation might be unwise; but, on the other hand, so was a mere truce. Peace was the object to aim at, but the time for rest was not yet come, and would not come till Spain made up her mind to bow her proud neck and frankly acknowledge the independence of the Republic. The struggle for national being, for liberty of belief, and for future growth had still to be fought out; and it was the true policy to fight it out now, when the hands of Spain were filled with bloody work in other parts of Europe.

Suppose, then, that the Prince and Aerssens could induce Richelieu to launch an army against the rear of the Spanish Netherlands, and thus subject them to a cross-fire, some under-

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[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 97.

[2] The question is discussed by Groen van Prinsterer in the Prolegomena to vol. iii. of the second series of the Orange Archives; by Professor Freun in the *Algemeene Konst-en Letterbode*, 1859; and again by Groen van Prinsterer in the Prolegomena to vol. iv. of the second series of *Orange Archives*, pp. lxx.–lxxxvii.

standing must be come to as to what is to be done with them if they are conquered. The treaty of 1634, therefore, was scarcely signed when the Prince and Aerssens set about negotiating privately[1] a new treaty, which was to contain the same obligation, and which was to tempt Richelieu, further, by the additional bait that the United Provinces and France should conquer and divide the Spanish Netherlands between them. Richelieu, who was now on the eve of plunging, with France at his heels, into that wild anarchy of thirty years, modified this proposal. He agreed that it was desirable to expel the Spaniards from the Netherlands, but he would not listen to a partition of the territory. It was more prudent, he thought, that the frontiers of France and the United Provinces should remain separated by an intervening, independent power. With this view he made a counter-proposal that the Spanish Netherlands, on being invaded by the French and Dutch, should be invited to revolt, under the pledge of their being made a free and independent State; and only in the event of their refusing to revolt were they to be conquered and divided. A line of partition was agreed on, and on these terms a new treaty (1635) was signed. Each party was now bound not to treat with Spain except "jointly and with the consent of its ally." There were likewise stipulations guaranteeing each other's interests. So jealously was the alliance guarded, that it was stipulated that, in the event of negotiations in common being entered into with Spain, the negotiation of the one ally was not to proceed ahead of the negotiation of the other.[2]

The Spanish provinces did not revolt, and the two powers were launched upon a war of conquest and partition. Under the protracted pressure of carrying it on, the idea of partition may have dropped out of view during the life of Richelieu, but Mazarin succeeded to it, and, as the world well knows, the war on the Spanish frontier became, in his hands, one of greed, conquest, and absorption. Enghien's (Condé's) victories and the rising might of France, however, re-aroused the jealousy

[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*. "Dese geheele handelingh geschiede sonder communicatie of kennis der Provintien," 104.

[2] Treaty of offence and defence, 1635, Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, 104.

of the Dutch. The belief grew clearer in the heart of the ruling men of Holland (the Orange family and its following excepted) that France had become too powerful to be a safe next-door neighbor to the Republic. With them, not an independent but a Spanish barrier between the United Provinces and France seemed indispensable, and the idea of conserving the Spanish Netherlands became thus, in opposition to Mazarin's view, a great question of State. If their little fatherland were in danger from either France or Spain, they might play off one against the other, and their own weight thrown into the nicely-adjusted political equilibrium would turn the scale in their favor. So they thought. The dread of France, the necessity of a Spanish barrier, consequently the desire to close the war with Spain, were ideas which grew among the patricians of Holland, until the doctrine became a wide and mighty political belief among them, threatening to dissolve the Union by the withdrawal of Holland from the other provinces.[1]

While this political aim of conserving a Spanish barrier, and making peace with Spain, was becoming daily more distinct among the independent patrician class of the province of Holland, a diametrically opposite view had all along held possession of the patricians and people of Zealand. Nothing short of the entire expulsion of Spain from the Netherlands would satisfy them, combined with the most literal maintenance of the friendship and treaties with France.[2] Here were elements of collision between the two leading maritime provinces. Geographically, Zealand was separated only by a narrow strip of conquered territory from the Spanish Netherlands, and was more exposed to invasion than any other province. Politically, the Orange influence reigned paramount in the province, and some of its towns stood in a peculiar relation to that house, whose desires were all in favor of war and of the French alliance. On this, Holland and the House of Orange stood in

[1] M. de Wilhelm to M. de Zuylichem, October, 1645, *Arch. de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. p. 149; Servien to De Brienne, February, 1647, ibid. p. 189; Servien to Mazarin, April 23, 1647, ibid. p. 212; also ibid. Introduction, p. xxvii.; also Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 226.

[2] Argument of the States of Zealand, in Aitzema's *Vredehandeling*, p. 260, '1.

direct antagonism. Moreover, Zealand hated Popery; it hated Arminianism, which was strong in Holland; and it was jealous of the influence and wealth of Holland. Zealanders who had shared in the great Oldenbarneveldt convulsion, and who had helped to crush the Arminian party, saw with alarm that party again raising its head throughout Holland. Its voice was again heard from the Holland pulpits, and its adherents were again sitting in municipal high places. And, with Arminianism, the old doctrine of the free, full sovereignty of each province was also shooting up its head; and the patrician rulers of Holland, by enforcing reductions of the army, by hampering the campaigns, and in other ways, were seen to be actually practising that sovereignty in a manner which seemed to Zealand to be sapping the foundations of the Union of Utrecht.[1] The more decided, therefore, Holland's views grew in one direction, the more decided became Zealand's in the other. Friesland, also, in which a prince of the younger branch of the Orange house ruled as stadtholder, was eminently warlike in leaning; and around Zealand and Friesland and the Prince of Orange were clustered, more or less closely, in opposition to Holland, the four remaining provinces of the Union.

Thus the Provinces and the House of Orange stood related to each other in 1644, when that chapter of the negotiations opened which was to end, four years afterward, in the peace of Münster. The history of the interval is the history of the struggle by one side to carry through, and by the other to prevent, the conclusion of that peace. All Holland's efforts were directed toward wrenching and detaching its six confederates and the House of Orange from the French alliance, and leading them toward an end of the quarrel with Spain. Zealand, which had grasped the character and ulterior drift of Holland's policy with considerable accuracy, obstinately refused its consent to any negotiation at Münster, unless under a formal pledge providing for the maintenance of the union between the Provinces.

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[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, pp. 199, 263; also *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, Servien to De Brienne, February, 1647, p. 189.

In 1644, when the French plenipotentiary, Servien, passed through the Hague on his way to Münster, a treaty preliminary to the negotiation had been entered into between him, on behalf of France, and the States-General, which modified somewhat the position. It revived and continued the former treaties; the conquests from Spain were to be mutually guaranteed, and no treaty was to be made except with common consent.[1] Servien's instructions as regards Spain, which were, for the most part, a hollow mockery, and not intended by Mazarin to be carried out, were to conclude (not a truce, but) a peace with Spain. The Dutch idea, on the other hand, was to conclude merely a truce; it does not seem to have entered into any Dutch head to negotiate for a lasting peace, however much Holland desired a lasting peace.[2] Zealand, the watch-dog of the Union, at once foresaw the results that would arise if France obtained a permanent peace and the United Provinces a mere truce, and fought desperately for the insertion of a clause in this new treaty with Servien binding France to resume the war, if Spain declined to renew the truce with the Dutch at its expiration. France would not consent to the clause, and the new treaty was signed by the two allies without it. Supposing, then, that the French concluded a peace and the Dutch a mere truce, the latter had before them the prospect of being left to contend single-handed against the whole might of Spain when the truce was ended. In the face of this impending danger, the opposition of Zealand to any negotiation whatever with Spain became intense and bitter.

The Dutch ambassadors did not set out for Münster to negotiate for their truce until the beginning of 1646, twenty-two months after the French plenipotentiaries had arrived there; and the first news with which they were greeted was that the Spanish king had offered to submit all differences between France and Spain to the decision of his sister, who was also Queen-mother of France.[3] Old Adrian Pauw returned instantly in haste to the Hague to make this fact known. At

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[1] Treaty of 1644, Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 172.

[2] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 216.

[3] Ibid. p. 222.

the same time, in the Hague, the French ambassador to the States-General informed the Prince of Orange that a marriage was in the course of being arranged between the young French king, Louis XIV., and the Spanish Infanta, whereby the Spanish Netherlands were to be given in dowry to France.[1] Conceive the commotion that these two announcements caused in the Republic. Wild distrust seized Holland, and vague terrors, lest France was secretly betraying the Provinces. Loud accusations ran through the streets that France was carrying on secret negotiations, and was thereby violating the treaties which bound her to treat in common with the Dutch. The dread was universal that Spain, with the dowry of the Spanish Netherlands, might also transfer to France her claim to the sovereignty of the Seven Provinces themselves, and thereby create for the Dutch a new war of independence against France. What availed it though the French plenipotentiaries at Münster declared that the Queen-mother had refused the proffered submission, and read letters (tricked-up letters, the Hollanders called them[2]) from the Queen-mother, Condé, and Mazarin, to assure the plenipotentiaries that they would never separate their negotiation from that of the Dutch? D'Estrades denied that he had ever told the Prince about a Spanish marriage, and insinuated that the Prince's faculties, from failing health and increasing years, were muddled, and that he had misunderstood the purport of the conversation.[3] But that sufficed not. The French plenipotentiaries at Münster also denied that a marriage had been thought of;[4] but the statement on their part was a lie, as no doubt D'Estrades's denial was also. Even thus early had the Spanish marriage, with a transference of the Spanish Netherlands to France by way of dowry, taken hold of the wily cardinal's mind.[5] The truth of

[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 222.

[2] "Opghepronckte brieven," Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 226.

[3] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 224.

[4] Ibid. "Soo hebben de Heeren Fransche ambassadeurs tot Münster . . . getragt, sodaer als elders te persuaderen de falsiteyt van 't selve gerucht."

[5] *Négotiations secrètes touchant la paix de Munster et d'Osnabrug*, III. p. 49 (Memoir by Mazarin to the French ambassadors at Münster, February 10, 1646); Letter by Mazarin, March 8, 1646, *Negotiations at Münster*, III. p. 112; see also

the matter was never in those days to become known; for we find De Witt, nearly two-and-twenty years afterward, writing to a Dutch ambassador at London, "that, during the Münster negotiation, the Spanish Netherlands were never offered to France, either by marriage or otherwise, as to him" (De Witt) "is very well known."[1]

The slowly-laboring States-General had not, till the middle of 1646, been able to make up their mind as to the conditions on which they were willing to conclude a truce with Spain. At last seventy-one conditions were prepared and sent to their ambassadors at Münster, and three or four more were reserved by the States-General for further consideration. The Dutch ambassadors presented them to the Spanish plenipotentiaries, expecting a prolonged and tedious discussion. But lo! within twenty-four hours the greater portion of the seventy-one conditions were accepted by Spain; and in eight or nine days they were all accepted save one, and no serious objection was made even to that. The Dutch were amazed; their negotiation was all but completed. Three of the Dutch ambassadors had even signed the adjusted articles; and by this bold stroke, to the astonishment of all and to the terror of France, Spain had split up the Dutch and French alliance, for the French negotiation was making no progress.

It was now the turn of the French plenipotentiaries at Münster, and of the representatives of France in the Hague, to raise a cry of alarm, of broken treaties and bad faith; and to demand that the adjusted and subscribed articles should be withdrawn, and that the negotiations should proceed abreast, according to the treaties.[2] They wanted also a declaration that the guarantee of France's interests contained in the treaties would be adhered to; but they so expressed themselves as to show that they interpreted the guarantee to mean a guarantee of all the possessions which France might hold at the close of the war, whenever that might happen. This opened up a

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Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces-Unies*, I. 88 *note*. See Wicquefort, also, *Nouvelles*, March 24, 1646.

[1] *De Witt's Brieven*, December 23, 1667, iv. 582.

[2] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 246.

weak point in all the treaties with France. What was it that was actually guaranteed—the French territory when the guarantee was granted? France's conquests in the Netherlands merely, in pursuance of the treaties? or the conquests made on all points of her frontier, indiscriminately, during the war?[1]

The split now grew wider. The French-disposed party, and all in favor of war, clamored for the negotiation being made *pari passu* with France; but the provinces taking this view could not agree as to the nature of the guarantee of territory which had been given under the treaties.

Another circumstance occurred to affect vitally the humors of the Provinces. Down to the beginning of 1646, the party favoring war and the French alliance had found their chief countenance in the support of the Prince and Princess of Orange—Frederick Henry and his wife, Amalia van Solms. But, early in that year, Spain obtained the ear of the Princess and her influence in favor of peace.[2] She had undoubtedly been bought off by Spain, not as yet with actual treaties, but with the promise of advantageous treaties for her house.[3] Other considerations operated also to carry her over to Spanish interests. She had seen for some years the old warrior's (her husband's) strength leaving him; and in the last year or two of his life we can discern a beautiful, womanly anxiety in her letters.[4] "He is more fit to be in his chamber than at the head of his army,"[5] writes this gifted woman. She evidently felt that it was time he should lay off his harness and take his rest—near to her, that she might watch over him. His intellect was becoming feeble, and his huge body—a mass of flesh, ambassador De la Thuillerie called it, in writing to Mazarin,[6]

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[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 246.

[2] *Archives Orange*, De la Thuillerie to Mazarin, June 11, 1646, second series, iv. p. 155.

[3] *Archives de la maison d'Orange-Nassau*, De la Thuillerie to Mazarin, June 11, 1646, p. 155.

[4] Ibid. iv. the Princess to M. de Zuylichem, October 8, 1645, p. 146; November (?), 1645, p. 150; the Princess to the Prince, July 23, 1646, p. 159; De la Thuillerie to Mazarin, July 31, 1646, p. 159; Princess to Prince, August 5, 1646, p. 163.

[5] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. p. 159.

[6] Ibid. iv. July 23, 1646, p. 159.

which owed some of its bulk and some of its ailments to over-eating—was rapidly becoming dropsical. He was being constantly rebuked by his wife for over-indulgence at table; but the old Prince enjoyed his food. Her sway over her lord had always been great: in these later years she entirely governed him. The goal of her ambition had come to be the conquest of Antwerp; but she had to sacrifice it in consequence of the growing infirmities of the Prince, and partly from the strong peace attitude of Holland.[1] She evidently prepared the gray old warrior for laying his sword at last in the scale of peace. The intriguing French ambassadors at the Hague could make nothing of this sharp-witted woman, now about forty-four years of age. High-spirited and proud, with rather a weakness for money, disposed to meddle in public affairs, she was still the woman, and the French ambassadors sometimes sent her into a passion and a flood of tears. But, altogether, she was a noble type of woman, as our own Temple bears witness.

While they, in this manner, became detached from France, their son, Prince William, remained devoted to the French cause. This was a young war-steed panting for the battle.[2] He had been with his father in several campaigns, and had done one or two gallant acts. His first, according to Huygens —literary Huygens—in a letter to the Princess, "was one of the finest actions which has happened for twenty-five years." He was surrounded in his youth by French influences, and in the summer or autumn of 1645, before his mother had passed over to the side of Spain, and while she was dreaming of the conquest of Antwerp, the sharp-eyed French ambassador had begun to tamper with him, unknown even to Mazarin. Prince William was then nineteen years of age. D'Estrades filled the lad's head with dreams of *gloire*, stuffed him full of distrust of Holland, and graved deep upon his mind the fact that, if

[1] Notwithstanding this, the Prince, in the autumn of 1646, when his health was rapidly declining, projected with the French ambassador an attack on Antwerp or Brugge. Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, 248.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, Mazarin to D'Estrades, September 17, 1645, iv. p. 143; De la Thuillerie to Mazarin, ibid. July 23, 1646, p. 159; D'Estrades to Mazarin, ibid. August 29, 1646, p. 265; Servien to Mazarin, ibid. March, 1647, p. 193.

the war ceased, his influence would be gone, even should he be so much as permitted to succeed to all the offices of his father. It was then happening that, on the other side of the belt of Spanish provinces, young Enghien (afterward Condé), his senior by six or seven years, was reaping immeasurable renown. D'Estrades's lessons sunk deep. The young Prince chafed at the thought of being bridled by peace. He had been bred from his childhood to regard this Spanish war as the field in which he was to earn his fame; and the gallant youth was panting for the hour when he should reap the glory that would equal or exceed the lustre of the victories which had crowned with enduring laurels the brows of his uncle Maurice and of Frederick Henry, his father.

His portrait can still be seen in the Maurice House in the Hague: a handsome youth, with a forehead noble, and rising like a tower. The eyes are deep hazel and intelligent, and have the promise of genius in them. His face is pensive and thoughtful, and kindliness and benevolence beam through it. De Witt, who had reason to be tempted to form an adverse judgment of him, says, dispassionately, that he was the ablest of the family. When he was in England in 1640, in his fourteenth year, to obtain his English wife, the boy's handsomeness and his grace of manner won all hearts.[1] And he died so young, too—in 1650, at the age of twenty-four—with the world full of promise to him, a week before his only son, our own little Dutch William, was born.

As the star of the old Prince his father dipped lower in the west and approached its setting, this youth became the hope of the wily cardinal at Paris and his minions in the Hague. Mazarin kept up a secret intercourse with him, and managed, through dexterous flatteries, to draw him still closer to the French interests. The youth himself had cunning, too; and, to conceal this French intercourse from his parents—especially

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, iv. F. Aerssens to the Prince of Orange, May 3, 1641, p. 441; the Earl of Warwick to the Princess of Orange, p. 445 —"Sans flater, madame, permettés moy de dyre à V.A., que vous avez un très-gentill cavalier à monseigneur vostre fils, qui c'est comporté si bien qu'il a gainé tout le monde icy, et faict un entier conqueste de tout ce pays," etc.

his mother, of whom he stood in dread, and with whom he was on bad terms, thinking she treated him shabbily in the way of money[1]—he established secret channels of communication between the French ambassador in the Hague and himself. He found friends ready to play the part of secret go-betweens between him and the French agents; for a party was already forming round him in the State, but forming covertly as long as the old Prince lived.[2] Young Cornelius Aerssens of Sommersdyke—son of that Sommersdyke (now dead) who had been one of the authors of the "Conquer and divide" policy of 1634—had inherited his father's devotion to the French alliance, and was attaching himself to the young Prince, as his father had attached himself to the old.[3] Musch, a hoary-headed rogue, who had been secretary to the States-General for many years—a man corrupt to the very marrow of his being; in French pay; "a devil, and a faithless one, too, whom you must bribe with eight or ten thousand francs," writes ambassador De la Thuillerie to Mazarin[4]—had also become one of the Prince's confidants. An illegitimate cousin, Beverweert, was also the repository of his secret thoughts.[5] Through these confidential advisers the young man was acted upon by Mazarin's diplomatic functionaries in the Hague. He also carried on concealed intrigues of his own among the provincial deputies who formed the States-General, the youth himself personally remaining all the while in the background. The mother and slowly-dying father had thrown their influence one way—in favor of peace; the young Prince, the hope of the future,

[1] *Orange Archives*, Servien to Mazarin, March 19, 1647, second series, iv. p. 195; ibid. Servien to M. de Brienne, March 26, 1647, second series, iv. p. 199.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, iv. Servien to Mazarin, February 5, 1647, p. 181; Servien to Mazarin, April 23, 1647, p. 212.

[3] Ibid. iv. p. 195, Servien to Mazarin, March 19, 1647; De la Thuillerie to Mazarin, October 28, 1647, p. 245.

[4] June 11, 1646, *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. p. 156; see, also, D'Estrades to M. de Brienne, May 18, 1648, p. 260: "Musch est si fourbe qu'en France il nous promettroit merveilles et recevroit volontiers les choses qui lui seroient offertes, mais qu'estant de retour ici n'en travailleroit pas mieux pour nous, si le moindre profit du monde se rencontroit à luy en changeant."

[5] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, iv. Servien to Mazarin, March 19, 1647, p. 195; April 23, 1647, p. 212.

threw his the other. He "breathed nothing but war."[1] The House of Orange was divided against itself.

All the intrigues, all the French mining and burrowing in the Hague, after Spain's wholesale acceptance of seventy out of the seventy-one articles proposed by the Dutch, failed to move Holland. Zealand still harped on obtaining from France an obligation to resume the war, if Spain would not renew the Dutch truce. It was these reiterated importunities at Münster which one day, in the summer of 1646, evoked from the French plenipotentiaries the retort why the Dutch did not negotiate also for a peace; and the idea thus suddenly flashed off seized upon and captivated the mind of the whole oligarchy of Holland.[2] France was astounded to find that Spain accepted the terms of the proposed peace with the same swift and eager alacrity that she had consented to the Dutch conditions of truce.

Thereupon the French plenipotentiary, Servien, himself took the matter in hand, and came over from Münster to the Hague to try what he could do to set the whole business on a French footing. He, representing Mazarin and the French government, had three centres of opposition to fight against: 1st, the whole body of opinion in the Holland oligarchy; 2d, the secret representatives or agents of Spain; and, 3d, the French enemies of Mazarin. The chief instrument of these last in the United Provinces was the Count de Saint-Ybar, one of the chiefs of the scattered and broken party of the Importants, who, since their attempt to assassinate Mazarin, were now scattered over Europe. The soul of the party, Madame de Chevreuse, was carrying on, from the Spanish Netherlands, a correspondence with the Spanish and Catholic party throughout Europe, with the object of overwhelming Mazarin. Her life had been one long struggle in favor of the Spanish and Catholic cause; one long struggle to overturn the policy of Mazarin; one long struggle to bring France

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, iv. Servien to Mazarin, March, 1647: "Ne respirant que la continuation de la guerre et ne pouvant presque souffrir qu'on lui parle de la paix," p. 193.

[2] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 257.

over to a Spanish alliance. Failing in this; failing in a projected assassination of Mazarin—the hated foreigner, the man who robbed her of her influence with the Queen, the head and motive power of the opposition to Spain—she was now trying to concentrate Catholic Europe against him. To detach the Dutch from France and leave them neutral would be a great point gained. Her line of intrigue in Holland thus becomes at once apparent. It was to strengthen the peace party in Holland, and to counter-intrigue Mazarin and his agents. Such was the object of Saint-Ybar's visits to the Hague in these months. He labored to confirm Amalia van Solms in her inclinations for peace; he had interviews to that end with her trusted officials, and also with Pauw, Obdam, and other leaders of the peace party in Holland.[1]

The Hague now became, during the first seven months of 1647, just on the eve of John's settling in it, and while Servien was resident in it, a hot-bed of intrigue. Spain, under false pretences, obtained a passport for an emissary, whom it sent to the Hague a day or two before the arrival of Servien. Servien had come over from Münster, under the firm belief that incorruptible old Adrian Pauw, one of the plenipotentiaries named by Holland, had been bribed and bought up by Spain. He arrived, therefore, in the very worst humor. He was indignant when he heard that the Spanish agent had received an audience; denounced him as a Spanish spy, and demanded his dismissal. Holland smiled complacently, took the Spanish spy under its protection, and in due time prolonged his passport. He strove also to obtain an interview with Andrew Bikker, the stout burgomaster of Amsterdam; got one not without difficulty; adroitly tried to bribe him,[2] and failed. He brought down upon himself the wrath of Holland, by

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[1] Cousin, *Madame de Chevreuse*, appendice, 427.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, iv. Servien to De Brienne, April 1, 1647, p. 205: "Son humeur inflexible et bizarre ne m'a pu donner aucun accez auprez de lui, ny aucune voye pour le ramener." Ibid. Servien to Mazarin, May 28, 1647, p. 228: "J'ay trouvé le moyen d'entretenir Biquer (Bikker) . . . Avant que me separer de luy, je luy ay proposé qu'il devoit estre desormais le directeur des intérestz de la France en ce pays."

publishing his conviction that plenipotentiary Pauw had been bought by Spanish gold. The French plenipotentiaries at Münster had even refused to hold further communication with Pauw, and the incorruptible old man came anxiously, and of his own motive, to the Hague, to vindicate himself before the States of Holland and the States-General.[1] Servien was now at deadly strife with Holland. He wanted a new treaty, guaranteeing to France the whole of the French conquests everywhere since Richelieu's rupture with Spain; and he insisted on a negotiation abreast with France, until Spain was beaten into what France called the granting of a "good peace."

Holland, goaded apparently by his uncompromising efforts to undo its own work, now declared that "satisfaction to superfluity" had been given to France, and it began to agitate for the conclusion of a peace without France.

Servien had come to the Hague counting on the support of Zealand, Utrecht, and the young Prince; and hoping, perhaps, by means of victorious diplomacy to shake the Spanish leanings of the old Prince and his wife, and even of some of the deputies of Holland. But the old Prince was now on his death-bed, and died during these seven months—March, 1647—when Servien was mining and burrowing in all directions. His death gave a vigorous impulse to the hopes of France. "It is in the Prince," the young Prince, "that we can find our principal surety against all the bad resolutions of this State." Servien, therefore, redoubled his flatteries and intrigues around the youth, now over twenty years of age, carrying them on chiefly through the agency of the Prince's confidants. The youth had at first stoutly opposed Servien's project of guarantee; then he veered round and supported it, counselling Servien to take high ground with the States-General, and to summon them to continue the war until the complete execution of the treaty of 1635.[2] We find the youth, through his agents, intriguing on behalf of France with Zealand, Utrecht, Gelder-

[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, pp. 313, 329.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, Servien to De Brienne, March 26, 1647, iv. p. 202.

land, and Overyssel. Give him his will, and the Republic will be once more in the thick of the war.

Holland, however, had effectually muzzled him. The States-General had, on his father's death, appointed him captain and admiral-general of the Union, in accordance with a promise made at his birth; and he had in addition, also since his father's death, step by step, been made stadtholder of Gelderland, of Utrecht, of Overyssel, and of Groningen. But Holland, under the guise of giving him a joint commission with Zealand to the stadtholdership of the two provinces, contrived to delay his appointment to that function for nine months, by the end of which time the peace with Spain was beyond shipwreck. John entered the society of the Hague when the young Prince and the States of Holland were fencing with each other, when he was still thus muzzled, and when the secret reasons of Holland for withholding from him the stadtholdership of the province were gossiped about and debated at every dinner-table in the town.

Although the peace was beyond danger, there followed several cloaked efforts and devices on the Prince's part, aided by the French-disposed provinces, to bring about a renewal of hostilities with Spain. "Rather than be drawn into a campaign," said Holland, "we will stir heaven and earth to prevent it."[1]

The young Prince submitted to the unavoidable; he could not afford to break with Holland until he was sure of his appointment as stadtholder of that province and Zealand. He had reticence, and some power of hypocrisy within him; so he returned to tennis-playing, theatre-going, hunting, and the seductive allurements of a French ballet-girl, not altogether, let us hope, to the neglect of his English princess: and in this manner awaited his time.

Servien was obliged to accept such a guarantee as he could get, or to want one altogether.[2] He accepted it, and vanished

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[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. Servien to Mazarin, May 14, 1647, p. 216; Mazarin (?) to Servien, May 25, 1647, p. 219. *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. p. 219.

[2] Treaty of July, 1647, in Aitzema's *Vredehandeling*, p. 327. Four towns of Holland dissented from the other Holland towns in reference to the guarantee

from the Hague: he went back to Münster to renew his wranglings with his co-plenipotentiary there. It was given under a threat (Holland at the moment carrying everything before it) that, if he did not accept the terms offered, or, accepting them, if France "tergiversated" in its negotiation with Spain, the States-General would conclude a peace without France,[1] yet they would intimate to Spain that certain terms specified must be granted to France by Spain. The remaining differences they would be ready to remove by arbitration.

What had become of Zealand at such a crisis? Its opposition had been partly bought off by Holland with a promise of a vote of succor to its West Indian Company, now, through bad management and the progress of the Portuguese rebels in Brazil, in a hopeless condition. This Company was dear beyond measure to the heart of Zealand. It was chiefly a Zealand enterprise, and had been got up out of jealousy of Holland and to rival the great East Indian Company, which was identified with the latter province. Large numbers of Zealanders had embarked in the West India enterprise; merchants, clergymen, and widows were share-holders; and the capital of orphans had been largely invested in the now moribund scheme.

It was into this world of keen intrigue and of sharp political life that the clearest brain in the United Netherlands was thrown in the latter months of 1647. The press was streaming with pamphlets, the events were on all tongues, and every man that walked the streets of the Hague was a political critic, better or worse. De Witt's profession made him the companion of quick legal intellects, prone to discuss the absorbing question of the negotiation at Münster, the attitude of the Provinces, the obligations to France, the hourly phases of the contest, and the motives of all concerned. His family relationship carried him into a similar element, and he thus stood in the thick of the gossip of a gossiping and criticising community.

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when it was discussed in the States of Holland. See Servien to De Brienne in *Orange Archives*, April 1, 1647, second series, iv. p. 205.

[1] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, pp. 334–'7.

The disputes between the Provinces had been narrowed to one single point, which, under the impetuous lead of Holland, the remaining Provinces yielded, namely, to attempt to reconcile France and Spain. The plenipotentiaries at Münster were instructed to use once more all means of bringing about a reconciliation, and if they failed they were to sign the treaty. They did fail; and the plenipotentiaries, even those representing Zealand, signed the treaty on January 30, 1648, with an understanding that the ratifications were to be exchanged within two months. All signed it except the Lord of Nederhorst, who represented Utrecht.

The signing of the treaty gave rise to another mighty convulsion, lasting over two months, which opened up the whole moral question involved in the breaking-up of the alliance with France. Had France "tergiversated," and had the plenipotentiaries done their utmost to reconcile France and Spain? These were the questions which troubled the moral consciousness of Zealand, and such as it could draw along with it. Zealand broke utterly away from the bridle (aid to its moribund Company) which Holland had put into its mouth, and opposed the ratification. Utrecht piped its little French song as of old. Zealand even repudiated the signature of Knuyt, its own plenipotentiary. This man Knuyt had sat for many years in the States of Zealand as representative of the young Prince's father, in his capacity of first noble of Zealand; had become thoroughly Spanish; was said to be bribed by Spain; negotiated privately a treaty at Münster, on behalf of the House of Orange; and was the passive tool of the Princess. The young Prince hated him for his Spanish proclivities. Knuyt was hated also in Zealand, and enemies of his were for a time welcomed to seats among the Zealand magistracy. He was envied as well as hated, for he had grown suddenly rich. Nobody knew how; all suspected how.[1] "A man who would sell his soul to the devil for money," wrote Brasset to Mazarin.[2]

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[1] *Orange Archives*, second series, De la Thuillerie to one of the plenipotentiaries at Münster, iv. May 22, 1646, p. 154; De la Thuillerie to ——, October 10, 1647, p. 240.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, iv. Brasset to Mazarin, June 11, 1646,

The last week of March was Holland's week for presiding in the States-General. It struggled hard to push through, during its week's presidency, a resolution for the delivery of the ratification on the appointed day. At first it had no following but Gelderland; the opinions of Overyssel, Friesland, and Groningen had not yet been received from their constituents by the deputies of these provinces. Late sittings and a Sunday meeting were alike ineffectual. On the Sunday, opinions from the three last-named provinces were received in favor of the ratification, but two of them desired that the ratification should proceed unanimously. Holland's week thus ended, and it had to surrender the president's chair to Zealand.

Five days more of struggle, during two of which the Prince was present, in his capacity of stadtholder, to bring about an arrangement between the provinces. Holland remained inflexible, and on the Saturday insisted that Zealand, as the presiding province, should pass the resolution. Zealand refused, declaring that unanimity was necessary. "After which," says Aitzema, "Holland finding the president's chair vacant, one of its deputies planted himself therein,[1] and declared, on the ground of five consents, that the ratification of the treaty be exchanged on the fixed date."[2] It was a rule ("ordre") of the Government, as it was phrased, that, if any presiding province would not put a resolution demanded by another which had a majority in its favor, it was bound to give way to the province which had presided during the previous week; and so on, till a province was obtained which would put and pass it. On this principle, Holland, without, however, some usual preliminary formalities, took the chair, and passed the resolution by a majority of five against two—

p. 156; De la Thuillerie to Mazarin, July 14, 1646, p. 158, and August 6, 1646, p. 163; the Princess to the Prince, July 23, 1646, p. 160–'2; Mazarin to Servien, January 25, 1647, p. 179, etc.; De la Thuillerie to ——, October 10, 1647, p. 240. Also Aitzema, *Saken van Staat en Oorlog*, iii. 247.

[1] This was done on April 4, 1648 (Dutch style). The sitting of the States-General on this Saturday lasted from nine o'clock in the morning till half-past seven —a long session for them. Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, folio 371.

[2] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 370.

Zealand and Utrecht being the dissenting provinces. Utrecht ultimately gave up piping its French song, and signed the treaty with the majority. But Zealand carried its opposition with so high a hand that the French ambassador, De la Thuillerie, in one of his letters, speculated on the likelihood of Zealand seceding from the Union, and on the problem how far it would be politic on the part of France to aid her by force of arms.[1]

On this convulsed state of things De Witt had to look with his clear, considering brain during his first six months' residence in the Hague; on this he had to form opinions and to converse with his fellow-men. The period, as we have said, is a great blank, like so much else in all this man's history. He is utterly hidden from us, like the seed below the earth which is feeding on the elements around it, and bursting with life.

It was an anxious time. As Aitzema puts it, the Republic labored as if in travail in ushering the peace of Münster into the world.[2] The air was laden with intense, vehement discussion. Every head was asking itself these questions: Are we to close the great peace with Spain and be at rest? or are we to stand by France, and renew, for untold years, the Spanish war? The great barrier question must have been debated in every dinner-party and social circle which De Witt entered: France as an immediate neighbor, or France at a distance. The scope of all the treaties with France must have been discussed, in their full bearings, by the hardest-headed lawyers and shrewdest men of business of the day. The old French aid to the Provinces, and the gratitude it entailed; the motives of France, the French leanings of the young Prince, the peace leanings of his mother Amalia, and the consequences of a rupture with France, were the subjects of daily conversation all over the Hague. The clear, considering brain had all sides of these questions presented to it—and not a word in reference to them is left us from his lips or his hand.

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[1] De la Thuillerie to ——, May 12, 1648. *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. p. 258.

[2] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, p. 367.

Zealand never ratified the treaty;[1] it only permitted its publication in the various towns of the province. Though the streets of the towns of the other provinces blazed with bonfires on the day of publication, not a mark of satisfaction or joy was to be seen over the length and breadth of Zealand. Leyden, a town of Holland, had taken Zealand's view of the ratification, and dissented from the resolutions of its own province.[2]

It is essential to note here that, with the establishment of this peace, the old policy of the United Provinces was closed, and an entirely new line of policy entered upon. It had now become a settled conviction of Holland that a barrier of Spanish territory between the United Provinces and France was necessary as a safeguard against the latter. But the idea of fighting to maintain that barrier had not yet arisen, though fighting was the outcome of the doctrine. All that the United Provinces now did, or could do, was simply to back out of the war with Spain, sit still, and look passively upon the conflict between her and France for possession of the barrier, until it should please the two belligerents to make peace. All that was left, at present, was the hope that France would not succeed in making itself master of the precious belt which severed them from that country. As yet, it is a vague hope with them; a sitting-down with passive, folded hands, and looking for some years upon the fluctuations of the battle. The day will come for skilled diplomatic fencing, and for the dread shock of war. But the turning of this passive looking-on—Achilles by his tent—into active resistance and into a command to France, "Thus far and no farther," was reserved, first for De Witt, and next for William III.; and its consummation was the work of one greater than either— Marlborough, our own English duke.

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. folio 253; and *Vredehandeling*, folio 383, where the terms of the resolution by which it permitted the publication in its province will be found.

[2] Aitzema, *Vredehandeling*, folio 384; *Saken van Staat*, iii. folio 272; Wagenaar, *Historie*, xi. p. 494.

§ 2. *The Attitude toward England.*

From the death of Elizabeth to the outbreak, in 1652, of the first Anglo-Dutch war, the history of the relations of the United Provinces with England is divided into three well-defined epochs. The first ends with the marriage, in 1640, of young Prince William, already mentioned, with the English Princess Royal, daughter of Charles I.; the second with the execution of Charles; and the third carries us to the war between the States-General and the Parliament.

The predominant character of the first is bitter irritation between the two countries; a smouldering flame of hostility which the merest accident might at any hour cause to blaze up into war. Both James and Charles were intensely obnoxious to the Dutch for many reasons: their Spanish leanings; their harassing interference with the Dutch herring-fishing; Charles's jealousy of France and of the French and Dutch alliance; his opposition to the proposed partition of the Spanish Netherlands,[1] and his keeping open of the Spanish havens in Flanders to the detriment of the Dutch. The feeling of the English, on the other hand, was not less hostile to the Dutch. They were jealous of the commercial prosperity of the Dutch, and were indignant at the Dutch claiming and exercising the right of fishing along the British coasts. They believed that the Dutch, by foul and unfair means, had turned English traders out of the Indian Seas, had juggled all the trade of the Archipelago into their own hands, and had consummated their work by the "murder," as it was called, at Amboyna of

[1] MS. in the State-paper Office, entitled *Summary Relation of proceedings with the Catholic States of Flanders*, 1640, No. 83 (*Holland Papers*). The *Relation* narrates that, on August 14, 1632, certain disguised persons called on Gerbier, the English agent at Brussels, and requested him to obtain power to treat with the Catholic States, which had sent them, with the view of protecting them from partition and from absorption by France or the United Provinces. The negotiation resulted in the English King instructing Gerbier to do nothing tending to withdraw the Spanish Netherlands from the rule of the King of Spain; but to promise, on his behalf, that if the King of Spain could not protect them, and if they declared themselves "free," he would "send them sufficient force" to protect them against the French and Dutch.

certain English merchants, on the plea that they were conspiring to upset the Dutch Government of the island. The heavy taxes to which English woollens were subjected in the United Provinces suggested to the English mind a deep-laid design to destroy and root out the commerce in woollen cloths carried on by England with the Netherlands. Both James and Charles kept up an irritating diplomacy for the settlement of these English grievances, and the question of the fishery had widened gradually into a claim by England to the dominion of the sea, which the Dutch, as the greatest maritime nation, resented. When Charles's Scotch troubles broke out he had not a friend in the United Provinces. On the contrary, both Richelieu and the Dutch hailed the Scottish rebellion, and gave the rebels secret aid;[1] and with the two peoples on this footing the first epoch came to a close.

During the second period (1640–'49), the House of Orange and its following not merely became, through the influence of the marriage, strong sympathizers with the Stuarts, but placed themselves in a position of covert hostility to the English Parliament. But the bulk of the Dutch people, led by Holland and Zealand, sympathized strongly with the Puritan cause.[2] This marriage, which was brought about by Henry IV.'s aged widow,[3] an exile from France, in the hope of enlisting the influence of England and the United Provinces with Richelieu on her behalf, had introduced a new split in the Dutch Republic. The eight years under review cover a period in which the Orange party were seeking to embroil the Republic on behalf of Charles, that they might flatter and, through Charles's success, aggrandize the House of Orange. That these objects were completely frustrated was entirely due to the determined opposition of Holland, backed by Zealand, and the overpowering instincts of the people in favor of the Scottish and English rebellion. The Dutch people interpreted the

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 521, 621.

[2] Queen Henrietta herself felt this keenly. Writing from Holland to Charles I. on September $\frac{9}{19}$, 1642, she says: "The people here are so Parliamentarian that it is with great trouble we can get anything from them." Green's *Letters of Queen Henrietta Maria*, p. 116.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 621.

movement as an upstand against the encroachments of Popery and a resistance to one whom they believed to be an apostatizing king. Remembering Philip and his persecutions, the quarrel seemed to them to bear some resemblance to their own. When Queen Henrietta, in 1642, went over to pawn or sell the Crown-jewels, to deliver the Princess Maria to her husband, young Prince William, and to stir up the States to support the King, she disgusted the people, and confirmed their aversion to his cause, by the open and offensive display of her Roman Catholicism.[1] The woman was imprudent and a bigot, though also clever and clear-headed. When the Calvinism of the Provinces saw with its own eyes what things were done at Royal head-quarters—how the most unvarnished Popery was triumphant there—the same Calvinists were the more rooted in their belief that the thing called English Puritanism had not armed itself without a reason, whatever sophistries might be thrown around the King's acts by his minions in the Hague. Add to this that there was scarcely a town in the United Netherlands that had not a Scottish Presbyterian or English Puritan preacher ministering to the English residents[2]—launching hard-headed denunciations against the King's designs as "Popish," and burning with unquenchable zeal for the Parliamentary cause.[3] These were all men of godly life and repute, known, respected, and trusted as orthodox by the clergy of the Provinces; many of them were pensioned by the magistrates of the towns where they lived, and some of them sat even in Dutch synods. Their voice was

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 815, 877. See also p. 878, where it is recorded that at her departure from Holland she would not allow her own boat to be shoved off from the strand until she saw her confessor and priests safely in another boat, being afraid that they would be detained and badly treated by the Hollanders.

[2] Steven's *Scottish and English Church in the Low Countries*, where the history of the Scotch and English churches in the various Dutch towns is amply given.

[3] Sometimes Holland was visited by Puritan preachers. Boswell, ambassador of Charles I. at the Hague, writes to —— (Sir Thomas Rowe?), in 1643, as follows: "Peters, whom your honor knows, the notorious Blow-coale, is lately come over, and, as he is precipitate, hath already begunne to open his pack at Amsterdam, in two sermons the last Sunday. The contents whereof, with the character of his conditions, is represented to the States-General and Prince of Orange." MS. State-paper Office, *Holland Papers*.

potent in framing and strengthening the Dutch view of the English troubles. From the outbreak of the Scotch war, therefore, down to the execution of the King, the mass of the Dutch clergy in Holland and Zealand watched keenly over the actions of their States lest they should be drawn into any step adverse to the Parliament. Those of sternly Calvinistic Zealand sent a deputation even to the States-General, with an unmistakable expression of sympathy with the Puritan and Presbyterian cause.[1] That assembly was filled with creatures of the House of Orange; these creatures listened; the creatures made no reply, but took their own blind way, building up wrath for themselves against the day of the Parliament's war.

Till the Queen's arrival in Holland in 1642, the Prince had labored honestly to prevent an outbreak between the King and the Parliament. He thought a reconciliation might be effected by, among other things, a little judicious bribery of the Parliamentary leaders. The distribution of "presents, benefits, recompenses, offices, and honors,"[2] which he recommended, was a Dutch idea; dirt in the balance with the rights and wrongs, the high questions, of Puritanism. He had a functionary in London, an official of his own, one Poliander Kerckhoven, of Heenvliet, who had been in England in 1639, assisting in negotiating the marriage, and whom he had again (in 1641) sent, before the Queen's arrival, to obtain delivery of the Princess Maria, who was residing with her parents, after her marriage, till she had reached mature years. This Heenvliet, as he was usually styled, after the name of his seigniory, is faintly interesting for us as the son of a Leyden professor who filled one of the chairs of theology during De Witt's university career. He was not a man strictly veracious: he once deceived his own benefactor.[3] Heenvliet, while conducting, on the occasion of his second-mentioned visit, the Prince's ne-

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. p. 928. They wrote at the same time a letter of encouragement to the Scottish Church, ibid. p. 929, where the letter is given. This was in 1643.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. p. 11.

[3] Lord George Digby's *Cabinet*, Goff to Jermin, May 1, 1645. Compare, for his untruthfulness, Bromley's *Royal Original Letters*, King Charles to Queen of Bohemia, $\frac{\text{May } 24,}{\text{June } 3,}$ 1649, p. 148.

gotiations in England with a view to the Princess Royal's departure to the Hague, was also negotiating privately on behalf of the Prince of Orange to bring about a reconciliation between the King and the Parliamentary leaders.[1] As the agent of a Prince who had just contracted a family alliance with the Stuarts, the Parliament necessarily distrusted him. So did Holland, on the ground that he was too hot a partisan of the King.[2] Holland strove to preserve the most impartial neutrality, and had, therefore, refused to associate him with the ordinary ambassador of the States-General in London, the many-yeared and cautious Albert Joachimi, in a mission of mediation.[3] Heenvliet, too, after the Queen's arrival in Holland, had to conduct much of the negotiating between her and the Prince when the latter was with his army in the field. And, while pushing the Queen's interests, he did not forget his own. He had married the Lady Catherine Stanhope, and importuned the Queen to obtain for his son the title of Baron Wotton, in contemplation of which he had set apart money to maintain the dignity.[4]

Up to this point the Prince was disinterested. When Heenvliet was in England, a second alliance between the Houses of Stuart and Orange appears to have been mooted —the marriage of Charles, Prince of Wales, with the eldest daughter of the Prince of Orange: two children of the Prince of Orange to be married to two children of the English King.[5] During the twelve months, from February, 1642,

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[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. 11; the Prince to Heenvliet, February 1, 1642; also pp. 16, 18–24, etc.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 813; "Houdende den Heer van Heenvliedt, een creatuur van den Prince, te seer konings."

[3] Compare Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 813; ibid. ii. 987; and ibid. iii. 35. This attempted intervention by Joachimi on behalf of the States-General, and by Heenvliet on behalf of the Prince personally, took place in 1642.

[4] Lord George Digby's *Cabinet*, pp. 12, 60; also Wagenaar, *Vaderlandsche Historie*, xi. 328; also Ludlow's *Memoirs*, iii. 309. Lady Catherine Stanhope was the widow of Henry Lord Stanhope, and daughter of Lord Wotton, of Wotton, in Kent, who died, without a son, in 1630. This was the second time the Wotton title had become extinct, and both Heenvliet and his wife were eager to revive it. Their son was created Lord Wotton in 1650. Collins's *Peerage*, ix. 478 and 423.

[5] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv. 49.

to February, 1643, that the Queen lived in Holland, there are mysterious references to the match scattered through the correspondence of the time. The King's object was obvious. Through the great influence of the Prince in the Provinces, Charles expected that the Provinces would be brought to close their war with Spain and give him active support. If the Prince could accomplish that, all the other conditions of this second marriage would be easily arranged; but that one object was the price of the heir-apparent's hand.[1]

The resolute attitude of Holland from the very outbreak of the English troubles had paralyzed the strongly Orange-disposed States-General, and had compelled them reluctantly to preserve at least the semblance, but it was merely the semblance, of neutrality. Most of the Orangemen in that assembly were willing to sacrifice the welfare of the people, if they could only gratify the Prince of Orange by favoring the King. They were quite willing that the people should be plunged into a new war, and their commerce and internal trade paralyzed, merely to obtain a little more worldly importance for this family. They were poor sycophantish men, lackeys in soul, hero-worshippers, and traitors to the cardinal interests of the State.

In like manner, the attitude of Holland and Zealand paralyzed the Prince: he could not directly do anything that would embroil the United Provinces with the Parliament. He yielded, not always willingly, to the Queen's ceaseless entreaties for aid; but still he yielded. "The Prince of Orange," wrote the Queen to Charles I., "is all that could be wished. I assure you that I think he will do all that can be desired.[2] The Prince lent her money;[3] he authorized Heen-

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, second series, iv.; Heenvliet to the Prince, July, 1642, p. 47, "Et qu'allors on pouroit encor faire l'autre affaire;" ibid. July 20, p. 49; July 24, p. 51, "L'aultre affaire," etc.; ibid. the Queen to the Prince of Orange, September 13, 1642, p. 71: "Plus grands malheurs qui pouroit ariver sur cette occation et traverser mes intantions, dans ce que je m'estois proposé dans une aliance plus ettroitte." See also pp. 92, 97.

[2] Green's *Letters*, p. 93; letter of July $\frac{21}{31}$.

[3] For one passage, among others, which might be cited, see *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. 49.

vliet (obsequious creature, with the scent of an English title in his nostrils) to creep stealthily about among the capitalists of Holland to obtain loans for her;[1] when Dutch money-lenders refused to advance money on some of the Crown-jewels, he consented to the jewels being falsely passed off as his own, that a loan might be obtained;[2] he sent officers from his own army to aid the King;[3] he helped the Queen to export ammunition under false names, and in disregard and violation of the laws of the State;[4] and he became a party to deceiving his own government, by sanctioning the obtaining of gunpowder under false pretences.

Still, at times, the Queen's insatiable desire for aid of all kinds exhausted his patience. In the seventh month of her residence in the Hague, Huygens — literary Huygens, the Prince's secretary — wrote to the Princess of Orange: "We have not yet got to the end of England's demands."[5] Again, in the following month, when a ship which was to convey Prince Rupert and ammunition to England was arrested by the States of Holland;[6] when Walter Strickland, as ambassador from the English Parliament, arrived in the Hague and demanded audience from the States-General; and when the Queen, threatening she would leave the Hague if Strickland obtained audience,[7] desired the Prince to return from the army to the Hague, for a few days, to save her from the affront

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. 48, '9.

[2] Ibid. second series, iv. The Prince to Heenvliet, p. 56.

[3] Ibid. second series, iv. Letter of the Queen to the Prince of Orange, June, 1642, p. 37; Heenvliet to the Prince, June 23, 1642, p. 38; see also pp. 55, '6, 59, 60.

[4] The history of this trick is fully given in a letter from Heenvliet to the Prince, June 23, 1642, *Orange Archives*, pp. 38–42. Before it could be carried out, the Parliamentary spies made it known to the Parliament, whose officers put themselves in communication with Joachimi, and furnished him with a list of the materials obtained by the Queen. Joachimi transmitted the list to the States-General, and Holland prevented the export through the usual commercial channels. Efforts were then made to export them under Admiralty passports. They were ultimately passed by the Rotterdam Board of Admiralty under the name of one Quarles. The Princess of Orange used her influence to get them passed. See also ibid. p. 76.

[5] *Orange Archives*, second series, iv. p. 60.

[6] Ibid. second series, iv. pp. 70, 72, 75, 76.

[7] Ibid. second series, iv. p. 65.

which she and the King would suffer by audience being given to "this rebels' man"—we find the Prince, with politest excuses, declining.[1] But the charm of the second marriage was gradually working, though it took a long time to work. Three years later, the poison had so wrought in the blood of the Prince and his ambitious wife that, for the sake of making what they deemed a good marriage for one of their daughters, the Prince consented to commit an act of treason against the Dutch people, by actually binding himself to lead them into war with the English Parliament.[2] The leading of them into war was to be done not openly, but insidiously and treacherously. The marriage contract was to be "so prepared that the Prince of Orange's alliance with the King should be kept secret from Holland, and only those things which, according to the fancy of Hollanders, pertained to a treaty of marriage, be made to appear in it."[3] French influence and co-operation against the Parliament was also to be invoked; and that was to be another way of strengthening the King's cause and smoothing the operation of the Prince's treason. Then, as luck would have it, an extraordinary embassy returned, about the same time, which the States-General had sent into England nominally to mediate between the King and the Parliament[4] —an embassy, however, not of impartial and judicial-minded men, but of Orangemen, and spurned and detested by the Parliament for their glaring partisanship of the King.[5] On their return they gave full play to their partisan spirit. "The Dutch ambassadors have been here these five days," writes Goff to Digby, on May 1, 1645 (o.s.), "wherein they have begun their report, and behaved themselves so well that his Maj-

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv.; the Queen to the Prince, September 13, "Selle homme des rebelles d'Angletaire," p. 70; the Prince to Heenvliet, September 19, 1642, ibid. p. 76.

[2] Ibid. second series, iv.; conditions of the marriage; compare the note by Stephen Goff and the note by the Prince of Orange, dated March, 1645, pp. 132–'4.

[3] Lord George Digby's *Cabinet;* collection of pamphlets, 1645, '6; letter, Lord Jermyn to Lord Digby, Paris, May 5, 1645, p. 20.

[4] This extraordinary embassy, which took place in 1644, '5, is not the embassy of Joachimi referred to above. Compare Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 813; and ibid. ii. 987; and iii. 35.

[5] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. f. 40.

esty cannot wish it better."[1] Again, on May 8, he writes to Lord Jermyn: "There is now or never something to be done upon this State by means of the excellent and clear relations which their ambassadors do make, both in private and public, on the King's behalf. . . . These ambassadors are so extremely set to bring the States to the King's assistance that no subject of England could express greater concernment; 'they will burst—*ils se creveront*'—(says the Prince of Orange) if they be not able to bring somewhat to pass."[2]

On May 15 Goff was again writing to Jermyn: "The ambassadors, on Tuesday, continued their report before the States-General, *en corps;* and after, in like manner, before the States of Holland for three hours' space, in such a method and with such clearness for the King's advantage that no subject of his could plead it better."[3] What hope of accommodation was there from men of this stamp? The ambassadors knew what would please the Prince; but there was more than this mere passive knowledge—they had actually their cue from him, so far had the poison eaten into his princely mind since Heenvliet's pacific negotiation two years ago. The cue which he gave them was, to urge upon the States-General the necessity of granting letters of reprisal against the Parliament,[4] in answer to complaints from Dutch merchants in England, who had probably been importing contraband for the King. "Believe me," said the Prince to Goff, "by this means they shall be engaged insensible in a warre. *Croyes-moy, par ce moyen ils seront engagés insensiblement dans une guerre.*"[5] He prescribed to Sir William Boswell, the King's faithful resident in the Hague, the task of proposing that liberty be given to the King to use the Dutch havens and to hire Dutch ships—another device by which this princely conspiracy against the high interests of the Dutch people was to work out its ends.[6] The committee of the States-General on English affairs, re-

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[1] Lord George Digby's *Cabinet*, Dr. Goff to Lord George Digby, Hague, May 1, 1645 (stilo vet.), p. 18.

[2] Ibid. Goff to Jermyn, May 8, 1645, p. 23.

[3] Lord George Digby's *Cabinet*, Goff to Jermyn, May 15, p. 28.

[4] Ibid. Goff to Jermyn, May 29, pp. 35, '6. [5] Ibid. [6] Ibid.

ferred to in one of Goff's letters, was to be a further engine for effecting the same object—a close committee, packed with the Prince's creatures, and designed, under the mask of honest action, to embroil the State. It was to have power to conclude on all matters relating to England without previous reference to the States-General—a power to which Holland would never have consented except in its own favor. And, besides all this, he had trustworthy minions mining to and fro among the town councils, distorting and coloring facts to make the town councillors the unconscious tools of his purpose. Here, as might be expected, we meet "that rogue" Musch, dipping his hand in everything evil. Some of the English residents in the Hague had fathomed this man's corrupt character: "Musch is a very serious servant of his Majesty, and ought to be gratified, whatsoever becomes of other business."[1] "Musch, the secretary, is as industrious as can be desired, but I fear he may think it long ere he find some fruit of his labors; at all events, that person is to be retained."[2] And accordingly, in less than a fortnight, efforts were made, unknown to the Prince—for Musch could not let his corruptness be known—to borrow a sum equal to £300 sterling from an Amsterdam merchant, Webster, as an instalment, and an earnest for him of what was to come.[3] Boreel, Pensionary of Amsterdam, one of the lately returned ambassadors, also distinguished himself in the same bad cause;[4] and as for Heenvliet, "it is not possible," writes Goff to Lord George Digby, "that any creature can be more industrious than Heenvliet is now." He had not yet got his son made an English baron; but that was not for want of persistent begging.[5]

These letters from which we have been quoting came into the possession of the Parliament, and were, with some passages suppressed, published in England, translated into Dutch, and republished in Holland; and thus the Prince's treasonable de-

[1] Lord George Digby's *Cabinet*, Goff to Jermyn, April 16, 1645.

[2] Ibid. Goff to Jermyn, May 15, 1645, pp. 27, '8.

[3] Ibid. Goff to Jermyn, May 29, 1645.

[4] Ibid. Goff to Jermyn, May 8.

[5] Ibid. Goff to Jermyn, April 16, 1645; Goff to Lord George Digby, May 1; Lord Jermyn to Lord George Digby, August 25.

signs became known to the whole United Provinces. His secret arrangement with Charles I. was not actually known; but it could be inferred from the letters. The revelation confirmed all the vague dread of the ambition and aggrandizement of the House of Orange which had been growing up for years in the mind of the patrician rulers of Holland; and they clinched their teeth more grimly, held on more tenaciously by their own "maxims," and distrusted more deeply than ever the motives of the princely house.

As the King's fortunes sunk, the marriage with the English heir-apparent did not appear to the Prince of Orange and his wife to be such an eligible match after all. The King, after waiting a year, could wait no longer; if he could not play his card successfully in the Hague, he must play it elsewhere. On April 9, 1646, therefore, by which time a new suitor for the lady's hand was in the field, their English Majesties broke off the match[1]—fortunately for the princess, as events turned out. A better fate was reserved for the amiable and devout girl, some of whose hymns are still sung in German churches, than to be wedded to our Charles II. She was to become the wife of a hero—Frederick William of Brandenburg, known in history as the "Great Elector."

Excepting that Frederick Henry had died in March, 1647, and his son William II. (the English Princess's husband) had succeeded to the princedom of Orange, matters were in this state when John de Witt returned from his travels and took up his abode in the Hague.

A corrupt house and its following were toiling and conspiring in one direction; the rulers of Holland, Zealand, and the body of the people were steadfastly pulling in another. The publication of the Digby letters had astounded all. People were in that frame of mind which made them ask each other if they were to buy a husband for one of the young princesses at the terrible cost of a new war.

It was a fact patent to every one in the Hague that the States-General was a packed body filled with the Prince's

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. p. 152.

creatures, and ready at a moment's call to sacrifice the people's interests to the vanity of the family. One of the first political lessons De Witt learned must have been to see into the aims of the House of Orange in this English business, and into the unhealthy sycophancy and self-effacement of the States-General. What we ought especially to note is, that the views of Holland, in favor of the strictest and sternest neutrality, were fully ripened and insisted upon before John de Witt came to the Hague: it was not left to him, in this question, to shape and develop the thought of the party he was afterward to head; the thing was in progress while he was still at the university, and done completely before he had even returned from his youthful travels abroad.

De Witt was resident about fifteen months in the Hague previous to the execution of the King. During that period the same struggle continued—the nation against the intrigues and conspiracies of the House of Orange. He saw the Hague filled with Royalist refugees, every man of them plotting to embroil the Dutch in the war; and the United Provinces converted, with the connivance of the House of Orange, into a base of operations against the Parliament. On the other hand, he saw that Holland, as the great sheet-anchor of neutrality and peace, was, as regards this question, the savior of the State.

In the early summer of 1648 came the Duke of York (James II. to be), then in his thirteenth year, fleeing from England in girl's clothes; a few months later arrived the Prince of Wales himself, then a young man of twenty. The Prince of Wales's presence in Dutch territory raised a discussion as to how he was to be received. The States-General ceremoniously welcomed him, and the States of Holland consented to compliment him; but the latter issued instructions to their representatives to use no words that would compromise the State.

The Prince of Wales, a pensioner on the bounty of his brother-in-law, now Prince of Orange, applied to the States-General for such aid as could be granted without an actual breach with the Parliament. Since 1643 the former body had

broken off all diplomatic communication with the Parliament. The venerable Joachimi still remained in England, accredited to the King; but the Parliamentary envoy to the States-General, Walter Strickland, could obtain no audience in that assembly. In the year last named—1643—Strickland had presented a paper to the States-General, by order of Parliament, charging the Prince of Orange of that time with giving orders to the Dutch fleet to allow certain of the English King's ships to escape from Dunkirk. The Prince declared this statement to be a calumny, and the States-General, eagerly seizing the pretext, resolved that no further communication would be received from Strickland. From 1643, accordingly, Strickland could not procure an audience from that body; nevertheless, by means of the powerful Holland, which readily admitted him to an audience at all times in its assembly, he was able, with tolerable success, to carry out his purpose in the Hague, and defeat the machinations of the English exiles and their Orange friends. The Parliament accepted this state of things till the middle of 1648, when, on the revolt from Parliamentary authority of a part of the fleet, and its flight into Dutch havens, Isaac Doreslaar (Latinized Doreslaus) was sent to the Hague with credentials to the States-General. Doreslaar was himself a Dutchman, born in the little herring-fishing town of Enckhuysen, on the western margin of the Zuyder-Zee, where his father was a clergyman. He had studied law in Holland, and graduated as a doctor of laws; but in 1628, on the recommendation of Vossius, he was appointed to the chair of History in Cambridge. Renouncing that office after a time, he became a pleader in the court of Admiralty, and attached himself to the cause of the Parliament. When sent to the States-General in 1648 as ambassador from the Parliament, he had still relatives living in Holland, and friendly connections with Dutchmen of note. The Parliament thought that Doreslaar's personal influence among his countrymen would enable him to restore the long-suspended diplomatic relations with the States-General. Not even to him, however, Dutchman of note as he was, would the States-General give an audience, though they offered to hear him by commissioners, which, as

derogatory to the Parliament, he declined. Holland's efforts to procure him an audience were in vain. Sir William Boswell, now for five years deprived of his estates in Kent by a Parliamentary sequestration,[1] with his allowance from the King much in arrear, and put to hard straits for want of money, which were mitigated and softened for him by the thrift and management of his wife, opposed, as the King's resident, every effort of Doreslaar and Strickland to obtain a hearing. The plea of the States-General for excluding Strickland had been that he had calumniated a high functionary of the State; there was no such plea in the case of Doreslaar; hence the States-General, in refusing audience to the latter, practically declared, what they had not yet declared, that they declined to receive any communication from the English Parliament.

A fact like this carried with it consequences too momentous to escape the notice of the shrewd men of the Hague, trained to discuss among themselves every incident relating to their public life. It stood there before the young De Witt, with the very springs of it, the illegitimate influence of the House of Orange, laid bare beneath the breath of the searching criticism to which it was subjected. What view of it but one could the young Hollander take?

When news reached the Hague of the resolution for the trial of the King, the Prince of Wales appealed in person to the States-General to intercede with the Parliament for his father's life, deputing Boswell to speak for him, as he himself did not speak French.[2] The States-General were on the horns of a dilemma: they had hitherto refused to receive any messenger from the Parliament, and now they were beseeched to send an envoy to that very Parliament they had scorned. It

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[1] MS. letter, Boswell to Sir Thomas Rowe, July $\frac{6}{16}$, 1643. Boswell, intimating to Sir Thomas Rowe that he had heard that the House of Commons had ordered the committee of sequestrations in Kent to sequestrate his estate, says: "All I can lose, be it life as well as fortune, is not worthy of consideration." *Holland Papers*, State-paper Office.

[2] MS. *Holland Papers*, State-paper Office. Copy of that in English which Sir William Boswell spoke in French to the States in presence of the Prince of Wales, January 23, 1649. Wicquefort, *Histoire*, p. 165; Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 297.

was clear to all that, unless the ambassador were drawn from the deputies representing Holland, there was not a man among them who would not be obnoxious to the Parliament. Holland, therefore, rescued the partisan assembly out of its difficulty by proposing that the leading man of its own provincial States, old Adrian Pauw of Heemstede, should proceed to London, along with Joachimi, the ordinary Dutch ambassador (then in Holland), to appeal to the Parliament on behalf of the King. Pauw had been identified with all the strong provincial policy of Holland during recent years; he was identified, also, with its strong neutral attitude during the English troubles, and was, therefore, a man whom the Parliament would listen to, if it would listen to any Dutchman whatever. He was not the man most palatable to the English Royalists, but he was the man best fitted for the work now in hand. The youthful Prince of Orange gave to the youthful Charles a hint to treat Pauw with respect, if Pauw should call on him to consult as to the best means of working out his mission: "For this man Pauw," said the Prince, "is the wisest man in Holland."

Laden with letters to the leaders of the Parliament and the chiefs of the army, these two old men, one verging upon ninety and the other upon sixty-four years of age, proceeded to London in that cheerless January of 1649. They started from Rotterdam in a small hooker, which was much damaged by the ice before they reached Briel. Putting in at Briel, where it was hastily repaired, they started again amidst high winds, which increased to a violent storm. The little boat was blown past Gravesend, where they intended to land, and they put in at Greenwich. They arrived at London on the Friday while the King's trial was going on (the King to be executed on the Tuesday following), and dispensed with all ceremonies to save time. They saw Fairfax and Cromwell, and found them both very civil; they saw all sorts of people who might help them to accomplish their end; addressed the Lords and Commons, who gave up their dinner-hour for the purpose, on the Monday; found the Lords willing to enter into a conference with the Commons on the subject, but received no answer from the

Commons. All the Tuesday forenoon—the sentence to be executed between two and three—they continued their efforts, and called upon various persons; went about London searching for Fairfax, whom they hunted out with much difficulty, and succeeded in persuading him to go to Westminster to recommend the postponement of the execution. Everywhere they met with civility—nay, even courtesy and amply respectful treatment; but there was no hope, save a momentary flicker which Fairfax kindled. It was delusive; for the men to whom they had appealed were not men to be turned from their stern and terrible way.[1]

In this manner the second period ended, and the third began. The tragedy on the scaffold at Whitehall produced a profound revolution of feeling in the Seven Provinces. Amazement and horror, then indignation, next wide-spread compassion; for the heart of the people was touched. The clergy and the body of the people, all except the governing and various other classes of Hollanders and Zealanders, deserted the Parliamentary cause. It was a complete transference of their sympathy to the Stuarts. This was not the generation that had risen against Philip; they did not stand in the heart of that fiery English business, or of any very fiery business whatever. They did not comprehend it very well; they heard conflicting statements about it; and now the spectacle of this black scaffold rose up to hide much of what they knew of it from their view. It was written about, talked about, and debated, in many lights; hard heads defending it, passionate hearts denouncing it, with and without the aid derived from their own revolt against Spain. They were not savage yet, but were gradually deepening into savageness; they will have become savage when the agony of the English war is felt.

The first difficulty which arose was as to the recognition of Charles II., then in the Hague. How was he to be styled in the address of condolence? To recognize him as King of Great Britain was to contemn the Parliamentary proclamation deposing the Stuart family; on the other hand, Charles was

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 298.

still King of Scotland. The Orangemen of the States-General wanted to give him all his father's titles, and to recall the ambassadors, in order to show that they held the Parliament and its proceedings to be illegal. Holland and Zealand objected. It was arranged to style him simply "Charles II.," without further specification. But when the resolution was brought up for confirmation in the usual form, on the day following that on which its terms had been settled, it was found to contain words which recognized his accession to the Crown of England as well as Scotland. This was the work of Musch—"that rogue Musch"—whose duty it was, as secretary to the States-General, to put its resolutions into shape. Holland and Zealand desired that the objectionable words should be struck out; and the amended resolution was to be brought up once more for confirmation on the next day. On that day, too, as on the previous one, the words "King of Great Britain" were foisted into the resolution by Musch, the Orange clique probably secretly approving. The Zealand deputies now lost their temper, and spoke warmly. Musch maintained—subtle rogue as he was—that the resolution had been so approved of; but he was compelled to remove the words he had unwarrantably introduced. Out of regard for the feelings of the King, it was agreed that the dispute should be kept secret. Charles was recognized merely as "Charles II.," without reference to either Scotland, England, or Ireland.[1]

So cautiously had Holland proceeded that it only consented to the embassy to intercede with the Parliament on behalf of the King, on condition that nothing should be said or done which could violate neutrality, and that no threatening language should be employed for the purpose of obtaining the end in view.[2] With Pauw and the cautious Joachimi, there was no need to fear indiscretion.

The Orangemen, both in and out of the States-General, sought a pretext for offence in the conduct of the ambassadors. Pauw reported that, in his interviews with Cromwell

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. pp. 323, '4.

[2] *Resolution of Holland*, January 23, 1649; Wicquefort, *Histoire*, p. 166.

on behalf of the King, Oliver had spoken with great respect of the United Provinces, and had proposed in Parliament that their inhabitants should be allowed to enjoy the same commercial privileges in England as the English themselves possessed.[1] Oliver already knew where the weak side both of Holland and Zealand lay. This brought down upon Pauw the resentment of the Prince of Orange and his following, who, says Aitzema, "would rather have had notification of things which would have embittered the inhabitants of this State, and excited them against the Parliament."[2] That section of the Orange following in the States-General proposed, after the failure of the intercession with the Parliament, not merely the recall of Pauw, but of both ambassadors, on the ground that, by their remaining in London, the States-General would appear to approve of the execution of the King.[3] Pauw had, in fact, stipulated, before accepting the embassy, that he should be permitted to return, without waiting for recall, in the event of the Parliament not agreeing to the proposal of the ambassadors. Holland and Zealand met the suggestion of the Orange faction by asserting that the embassy, failing in its object, had naturally expired, and that there was no need of recalling Pauw. A special revocation was, however, despatched to him: he was too deeply distrusted by the Orangemen to be allowed to remain longer in England. Joachimi was not recalled, but he was not furnished with new credentials to the Parliament; and diplomatic relations with England were thus virtually broken off.

Let us remember that all this was passing before the young De Witt's eyes.

The first signal-note of the change of feeling in the public mind came from the clergy of the Hague. They appeared before Charles to condole with him, and in their zeal turned their spiritual consolation into a political manifesto, which roused the blood of the States of Holland. Denouncing the execution as an unheard-of parricide, as an accursed sacrifice of a holily anointed head, as a crime "stretching against God,"

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 324. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

against "His word," and against "reason, humanity, and all good society," the deputation of blind ecclesiastics paralleled the King's death with the martyrdom of Stephen, and even with that greater death on Calvary.[1] When called to account by the States of Holland for this language, they declared that it was the Spirit of God which had put it into their hearts. They and the whole clergy of the province were immediately prohibited by the States of Holland from addressing foreign kings or potentates in future, on the ground that this function belonged to the State alone; also from alluding to the English troubles in their pulpits, and from corresponding with Englishmen over-sea.

De Witt had now been eighteen months in the Hague. He had had time to understand the well-marked aim of Holland and the equally well-defined opposing aim of the Orange faction. He saw also this singular and complete revulsion in the popular feeling; but he was a calm, clear man, and his judgment, as we shall yet discover, was never swayed by popular enthusiasms.

Strickland, who for a time had gone to England, had now returned to the Hague with new credentials from the Parliament; but still the States-General would not give him audience. Some of the English exiles threatened to murder him, and he was taken under the special protection of the States of Holland. Doreslaar had also departed for England at the end of 1648, and had acted at the trial of the King as one of the counsel against him. The exiles in Holland were mad with rage that a Dutchman should have been an accomplice in the "murder of the King;" and the rumor even ran in the Hague that Doreslaar had been one of the masked executioners. When he reappeared in the Hague in May, 1649, accredited anew by the Parliament to the States-General, a terrible fate awaited him. He was assassinated—pierced by eleven wounds—by some of Montrose's men, while at dinner in his hotel, on the third evening after his arrival. The Hague was in commotion: multitudes flocked on the following day to see the

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 331; Wicquefort, *Histoire*, i. p. 255.

body, which was exposed to public view, and which was immediately sent to England by Strickland, where the indignant Parliament gave it honorable sepulture in Westminster Abbey.

Even this murder of the Parliamentary envoy did not make the stubbornly Orange States-General swerve one jot or tittle from their hostile attitude toward the Parliament. They made no intimation, and offered no explanation, of the crime. Holland, however, instantly announced a reward for the discovery of the murderers, and desired Joachimi to communicate, on its own behalf, the fact of the assassination, and of its efforts to discover the murderers. This instruction to Joachimi was at once condemned by the Orangemen at the Hague as a violation of the "order of the government," on the ground that no single province had a right to instruct an ambassador of the Republic.

Joachimi, whose quality as ambassador expired with the King, was now ordered by the Parliament to leave London, and his request to the Parliament, that he might be allowed to make one more effort to obtain credentials and authority to recognize it, was refused. Holland perceived that all this was tending, sooner or later, to open war, and it put forth renewed efforts to stem the current; but it could not procure from the States-General an audience for Strickland. It also endeavored to induce them to grant credentials to Joachimi as ambassador to the Parliament, thinking by this means to avoid the rupture that was evidently being forced on. All its work was in vain. As a last refuge from coming calamities, Holland itself resolved, to the dismay and wrath of the Orange party, to send an ambassador of its own, under the disguised name of a commissioner or commercial agent, to London, to attend to all English business affecting that province. This commissioner was honorably received by the Parliament, and had a long residence in England. Strickland hung about the Hague unrecognized and unheard by the States-General, but receiving audiences from Holland whenever he pleased. He remained in Holland until the liberties of that province were suppressed, in the middle of 1650, by the Prince of Orange.

Of Holland's struggle for three years, the young De Witt was a spectator. Let us remember that he was a Hollander,

that his provincial pride and patriotism would prepare him to sympathize with the efforts of his own native province to maintain peace. His father, all his Dordrecht friends, the most of the cultivated Hollanders whom he met in the Hague, were strong advocates for maintaining a friendly attitude toward the English Parliament. The interests of commerce, which was the key-stone of the prosperity of the Dutch, all the material interests of the United Provinces, called for peace. This was the sermon which every day, with a thousand voices, was dinned into his ears. It is well to repeat the fact that the political opinion of the province on this English question was formed before he entered public life; that for the ten preceding years the political leaders of the province had checkmated the House of Orange on this English question, and kept the State, against all the weight and efforts of that house, at peace with England. Remembering this, it will help us to understand his relation to the approaching English war.

§ 3. *The Nature of the Union, and the Struggle between Holland and the Prince.*

A series of events took place between the middle of 1648 and the summer of 1650 which touched De Witt's family deeply, and brought it into personal hostility with the House of Orange. These two years were years of fierce, bitter conflict between Holland and the Prince; there was a short, sharp catastrophe at their close which overwhelmed the De Witt family; and John sprung out of it the greatest champion of provincial sovereignty and the greatest opponent of the House of Orange that the United Provinces had known.

The question of these years, which gradually came to the front, was the nature of the union between the provinces. What were the function and limits of power of the States-General? was each province still a sovereign province, notwithstanding the union? and had the Prince of Orange any place in the government except what these sovereign provinces individually gave him, or jointly and freely conferred upon him in States-General assembled? On all these points the deed of union was silent.

The Holland rulers took the view which was historical with them, that no province had lost its sovereignty by the mere fact of union; that the States-General was simply a conclave of ordinary ambassadors, who of themselves could decide nothing, from the several provinces; that the sole abridgments of power which the sovereign provinces suffered were those expressly stipulated by the contract of union, or where they, through their ambassadors in the States-General, voluntarily and jointly bound themselves by a resolution on any point; that the Prince had no rights until he was elected by the States-General commander of the joint army of the seven sovereign powers, or was made stadtholder and servant of such provinces as freely chose to give him the stadtholder's office.

By the Prince and all the great Orange following these views were detested. They were held to strike down the whole fabric of the Union, and they certainly shore deeply into the honors, position, and real power of the House of Orange.

The first difference, at this time, which brought these conflicting doctrines to the light related to the control of the army, and none could have exhibited the conflict better. For a great many years Holland had complained of the grievous burdens which the war entailed; that the province was deeply in debt, and that every year there was an enormous deficit,[1] which had to be met by loans; that large arrears were due to the army; that some of the provinces were not paying up their share of the expenditure they had undertaken to pay; and that Holland had to make it good for them. It complained, also, that the army was to a large extent a sham army —a mere army on paper — inasmuch as the captains of companies regularly drew pay for an enormously greater number of men upon their pay-sheets than they had actually in the ranks. More provinces than Holland knew that the captains thus fraudulently pocketed large sums. So far back as 1626,

[1] In 1643 Aitzema was informed, on what he considered to be good authority, that the total income of Holland then was about 11,000,000 guldens. It paid annually as interest, etc., 7,000,000 guldens; its annual contribution to the army and to other joint burdens was 12,000,000 guldens; total, 19,000,000 guldens. Annual deficit, 8,000,000 guldens. *Saken van Staat*, ii. f. 899.

Zealand of its own motive dismissed a number of men,[1] but on a strong remonstrance from the States-General, who declared it to be against the Union, it cancelled the order. In 1642 Friesland dismissed a number of men in the same way; and though the step was declared against the "order" of the government, it persisted in the dismissal.[2] For half a generation before the peace with Spain, scarcely a year elapsed in which Holland did not call for economy and the reduction of the army; and, when that peace was concluded, its appeals became more strenuous and imperative. The young Prince, plotting as he was for a renewal of the war, opposed Holland with all his might. The disputes were long and bitter, and some concessions were made to Holland; but that province still demanded further reductions, and at last peremptorily dismissed a number of the men it paid. There had already, on this subject, been fierce outbursts of infuriated feeling against Holland: this was a signal for more, and the press and the pulpit resounded with wrath.

It was the function of a body known as the Council of State to prepare annually the army and navy estimates, or "state of war," as the Dutch called it; and the deputies in the States-General deliberated thereon, and approved or remodelled it under the command of their principals. Some agreement was generally come to regarding it, so long as the war lasted, and the amount was distributed among the provinces according to a fixed scale or quota.[3] Regiments were

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, i. f. 528. [2] Ibid. ii. f. 824.

[3] A pocket note-book of De Witt's has been preserved (MS. *Hague Archives*), containing the text, in neat, small handwriting, of the principal resolutions of the States and other memoranda. The following list of the quotas borne by the various provinces in the arrangement of the common or joint expenditure has been preserved on a loose leaf therein. The quotas are in guldens, stivers, and deniers.

	G.	*s.*	*d.*
Gelderland	5	12	3
Holland	58	6	2¼
Zealand	9	3	8
Utrecht	5	16	7¼
Friesland	11	13	2¼
Overyssel	3	11	5
Stad en Lande	5	16	7
	*G.*100	0	0

placed upon the pay-sheet of each province according to its quota or contribution, and the men looked to the province on whose pay-sheet they stood for their money. But the state of war could not be forced upon any province, for no province had parted with the sovereign right of determining its own expenditure. The provinces retained the absolute right of saying how much they would contribute, and how they would raise it.

The Prince and the six satellite provinces acted as if, by a majority of votes, they could compel Holland to pay any number of men they fixed upon, which was equivalent to giving to the majority a right to say how much money a province must raise—a doctrine which every member of the majority, if the principle were applied to itself, would have repudiated.

From this right of self-taxation it followed that both the States-General and the Prince were bound to accept the number of men whom these sovereign consents provided the means of paying. In other words, they had no right to put upon the pay-sheet of any province more soldiers than it consented to pay. If they did, there was no course open to a province, whose sovereign right of voting the amount of its own expenditure was invaded, but to intimate to the captains of the regiments so foisted upon it that it would not pay them. This is what Holland did, accompanying the intimation with an order to dismiss the superfluous men.

Holland's view implied that each province was master of the men it paid: that thus there was not one army, but seven armies; but this doctrine was not as yet broadly stated. The view of the Prince and his following was that the army was the army of the Union; that it was one undivided organism; that each province was bound to tax itself for the support of the army according to the will of the majority; and that no single province, therefore, could dismiss men. It is possible

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The same leaf states the percentage borne by North Holland as compared with South Holland at *G.*10 12*s.* $9\frac{15}{16}\frac{2}{0}\frac{1}{0}d.$ Aitzema (*Saken van Staat*, iii. f. 434) gives the quotas not quite correctly. The district of Drenthe, which had no representative in the States-General, contributed one gulden on every hundred raised by the Seven Provinces.

to accept the Prince's doctrine of one indivisible army for the Union without admitting the doctrine that the majority of provinces was entitled to determine the state of war, and thrust upon an unwilling province more men than it would consent to pay. Holland had joined the other provinces in denouncing Zealand's independent dismissal of soldiers in 1626 as a breach of the Union; and this is the point that tells most against Holland in its disputes of 1650.

The Prince replied to Holland's order to the captains to disband a certain number of men, by a *coup d'état*. He obtained from the deputies of four provinces in States-General assembled, on June 5, 1650, the day after the order to disband had been issued by the States of Holland, a resolution requiring him to instruct the captains of the disbanded men not to obey the command of Holland; and, further, authorizing a solemn deputation to proceed, not to the States of Holland, as legally it should have done, but to the various towns of Holland direct, with which towns the States-General had no right whatever to communicate. The deputation was to constrain the magistracy of the towns to instruct their deputies in the Hague to refrain from a merely provincial reduction of the army. The resolution further requested the Prince to take all necessary steps to preserve order and peace, and in particular to maintain the Union.[1] The vagueness of this request was intentional, the object being to cover, if necessary, even military proceedings against Holland.

The resolution, as we have said, was the work of four provinces only.[2] The two non-approving provinces and Holland

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[1] MS. Resolutions of the States-General, June 5, 1650 (*Hague Archives*); also Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 427. "Ende wort syn Hoogheyt middlertyt versocht ende geauthoriseert om alle noodige ordre te stellen, ende die voorsieninginge te doen, ten eynde dat alles in goede ruste ende vrede werde gheconserveert, ende insonderheyt gemainteneert en vast gehouden de Unie met den gevolghe ende aencleven van dien, ende in tegendeel geweert ende te gemoet getreden, dat ter contrarie van dien soude mogen worden voorgenomen." Also Wicquefort, *Histoire*, i. p. 230.

[2] Van der Capellen, *Gedenkschriften*, ii. 283, where it is stated that the delegates from Gelderland, while disapproving of the instruction to preserve peace, approved, nevertheless, of a deputation to the towns of Holland. Wicquefort, *Histoire*, i. p. 231.

bore seventy-five per cent. of all the joint expenses of the Union, and the provinces voting the resolution paid only twenty-five per cent. Of the four provinces whose deputies did approve of it, two were represented by one deputy only, and a third was represented by merely two deputies—that is, four or five individuals, at the instigation of the Prince, took upon themselves to authorize civil war.[1] But these four or five men had no authority to pass any such resolution. By the nature of the Union, and by the practice which had prevailed ever since its foundation, the resolution, which was framed by the Prince's creature, "that rogue Musch," should have been referred by the delegates to their principals for instructions. It was not so referred, and until approved of by the Provincial States, as it was ultimately, no resolution could be said to exist.

In this way the Prince proceeded with his work. He placed himself at the head of the "solemn deputation," consisting of three or four satellites, or rather he joined it at some distance from the Hague, after bidding adieu to Charles II., who was then setting out on his expedition to Scotland.[2] The deputation, accompanied by four hundred officers, began a visitation of the towns of Holland; and the first place this great cavalcade entered was Dordrecht, the prerogative town of the province. The burgomaster, at the request of the Prince, convened the Old Raad, but protested that the visit was a novelty, and beyond the order of the government, and that his summoning the Old Raad would not impair the sovereignty of the States of Holland. A Gelderland noble—Capellen, of Aertsbergen—who was spokesman for the deputation, read a

[1] *The Duncaniana Collection of Pamphlets*, 1651, vol. ii., preserved in the Hague Royal Library. The pamphlet, "Openhertig Discours tusschen een Hollander, een Zeeuw, een Vries ende een Over Ysselaer," etc., professes to give an account of the voting on this resolution. This writer says that the Prince had only three votes in his favor, that three were against him, and one province had absented itself. Both Wicquefort and Aitzema are indefinite and incomplete in their account of the passing of this resolution. The former differs from the author of the pamphlet, and all three from Van der Capellen in the passage last cited from his *Mémoires*.

[2] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, June, 1650; Aitzema, *Herstelde Leeu*, f. 15.

long document narrating the history of the difference, commenting on the action of Holland, and requesting the town to adopt the state of war, from which the States of Holland had dissented. The terms of the document offended the Old Raad; but they replied that they would consider it, and instruct their deputies to bring into the next meeting of the States of Holland, which were then in recess and had just been convoked, such a resolution as would best conserve the freedom and sovereignty of the states and towns of Holland, as well as the Union. The deputation, knowing that this vague answer would defeat their object in all the other towns,[1] had a further audience on the following day, when Aertsbergen threatened the Old Raad that the deputation would not leave the town until they had obtained an explicit declaration in writing whether or not the magistrates of Dordrecht would return to that Union from which they had separated, and he added that, in consenting to the disbanding, they had acted criminally, were punishable in their bodies and goods, and ought to have offered prompt reparation for breaking the Union. He further declared that, failing reparation, the deputation would be obliged to use other language.[2] The Old Raad, insulted and indignant, persisted in its resolution, and charged Aertsbergen with using language which he had not been authorized by his colleagues to employ. Aertsbergen desired to show to the Old Raad that he had not gone beyond his commission; whereupon Jacob de Witt (John's father), a member of the Old Raad and lately burgomaster, re-

[1] Van der Capellen, *Gedenkschriften*, ii. p. 455. "Syn Hoocheyt ende de Heeren haer Ho. Mo. Gedeputeerden hebben bevonden dat daermede haer Ho. Mo. Resolutie ende oochmerck niet alleen in die Stadt, maer oock by evolch in andere Steden vruchteloos soude werden gestelt.

[2] According to Capellen, in his *Gedenkschriften*, this "other language" was to be an interrogative addressed by the Prince to each member of the Old Raad what answer he had to make: "Burgemeesters! ick weet wel, dat U d'omvrage komt in den Out-Raedt, maer alsoo hier questie valt, van te houden, of niet te houden d'Unie, ende dat een iegelick gehouden is, daerop verclaringhe te doen aen den Stadthouder, die by eede verplicht is d'Unie te mainteneeren, ende doen onderhouden, volgens het 24. articul, soo vraege ick ieder lidt van den Out-Raedt, hier present, wat sy gesint syn te doen, om tegens d'onwillighe te gebruken 't recht ende de macht, dat d'Unie geeft?"—*Gedenkschriften*, ii. p. 285.

torted that they would hold no dispute on the subject, but would bring it before the States of Holland. The conferences then broke off.

All men throughout Holland were awaiting with profound anxiety the result of this interview. We must imagine the disappointment and wrath with which the Prince left Dordrecht, which had set an example and given a key-note to all the other towns. The general result of the visitation was that some towns gave him audience, some refused; but none consented to the object of his mission. Amsterdam, in particular, sent two deputations to him during his "round-riding," as the Dutch named his progress, requesting him not to visit that town as representative of the States-General, as the magistrates could not give him audience in that capacity. If he would come as stadtholder of the province, they would receive him with all honor. But the Prince would not lay aside his function as a member of the deputation, and, when he entered Amsterdam, the burgomaster (one of the Bickers) refused to convene the town council to hear the deputation. The council had, however, prepared a costly banquet in his honor, but he would not attend it. After riding at the head of his four hundred officers up and down Holland during the greater part of June, 1650, he returned to the Hague foiled, angry, and disgraced: Jacob de Witt, the burgomaster Bicker, and the city of Amsterdam were all to feel his vengeance.

The dispute with Holland, and this pompous cavalcade, four hundred strong, riding about from town to town, created an extraordinary sensation throughout all the seven provinces, and in Holland especially, the scene of its progress. The pulpits rung with political vituperations against the States of Holland, who were represented as breaking asunder the Union and ungratefully heaping insults upon the House of Orange. The lowest section of the people and all the uneducated classes of Holland, blinking ignorantly at the subject, at once took the rude and untutored view that Holland was bent on disgracing their beloved Prince. They could not tolerate that these stiff-necked burghers—who passed them by in the streets of their own town; whose offices or trading-yards

were but a few doors from their own cellars; who had never shed a drop of blood or risked a hair of their heads during the long Spanish war; who remained at home growing rich while the Princes and Counts of Orange and Nassau were in the trenches—should now, when peace was come, insult and domineer over their Prince, the genius of whose family had really made the Union. What did the young De Witt think of it? He would hear the whole character of the conflict between the States-General and Holland, the whole *pros* and *cons* of provincial sovereignty, debated all around him as the absorbing theme of every Dutchman. He probably saw the deputation leave and return to the Hague. He would hear of the interview at Dordrecht, the threats of the deputation and his father's reply; but not a line remains to indicate his feeling or opinion on the subject.

In June or July of this year—we cannot fix the date—one of the lampooners in the interest of the Prince issued a pamphlet containing the articles of a pretended treaty between the English Parliament and Amsterdam. The Parliament, during the months of August and September, 1650, was to land 10,000 men in Amsterdam for its protection, and to operate with a fleet of twenty-five ships against the six Orange provinces and their towns and commerce.[1] Everybody, except the more ardent adherents to the cause of Holland, believed in its genuineness. Schaep had only been a fortnight or three weeks in England as agent or commissioner of Holland, or ambassador, as the Orange party called him, and the fabrication of the pamphleteer looked exactly like the first-fruits of his mission. The pamphlet fell like a revelation upon the six provinces. Even the magistrates of the towns believed it, and the universal feeling was that Holland was now determined to wrench the Union asunder by civil war. Perhaps the Prince also put faith in the anonymous lampoon; at least, he could never foresee what Schaep might negotiate in London. The extreme acts of the Prince, however, which followed, sprung not from this unknown danger, but from the motives already

[1] The *Duncaniana Collection of Pamphlets* for 1650.

described. The pamphlet stung the town council of Amsterdam so keenly that they offered rewards of £120 and £40 for the discovery of its author and printer.[1]

Another pamphlet of the time describes the prevailing anarchy. The author makes a Zealander declare that in Holland they were all topsy-turvy in their opinions; the one town was for individual State sovereignty, the other was Prince-disposed; in some of them the rulers were at loggerheads even to the fighting-point. Some, for selfish ends, stuck by the Prince. One town, one magistrate — yea, even one burgher, would have betrayed another. At Dort (said the writer) the magistrates were nearly all good patriots (*i. e.*, favorers of Holland), but they had great trouble with their uproarious and headstrong guilds and burghers, who were nearly all for the Prince. Leyden was wholly Prince-disposed, as the magistrates and council were nearly all tradespeople and of common origin. For that reason they all aspired to get into the society above them. It was astonishing that in that town, where there was such a famous university, not six of the whole ruling body could speak any other language than Dutch or Walloon, so that they were led by the nose by three or four men. Delft was favorable to Holland, but was a weak town, and could have made no resistance to the Prince. Haarlem was the same. At Gouda the council was always split into two parties. In Rotterdam, which, along with Dort, was one of the best laid towns for frustrating the designs of his Highness—for, though it was not strong, the land around it could be flooded to the depth of ten or twelve feet—the town council were almost all heartily in favor of Holland; but Sommersdyke and Secretary Musch had a great connection there, so that every good resolution was betrayed to them and opposed; and, by means of fair promises and threats, the Prince always got the best of it.[2]

July and its "round-riding" passed, and there were renewed efforts for an arrangement, amicable proposals by Holland and

[1] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, July, 1650, pp. 33, 40.

[2] "Haagsch Winkel Praetje oft Gesprek," in the *Duncaniana Collection of Pamphlets* for 1651, vol. ii.

rejection thereof by the Prince. Holland had just sent forth a written remonstrance to its sister provinces, when the Prince, on July 30, 1650, cut the Gordian knot. He requested six of the delegates composing the States of Holland, one of the six being our De Witt's father, to call upon him at his house in the Hague. The unsuspecting men went at the hour appointed, and were instantly arrested. He also ordered soldiers into the Hague, and he caused troops to march against Amsterdam, under the command of his cousin, the Friesland stadtholder, Count William of Nassau.[1] The troops failed to capture the city, and they sat down round its walls to besiege it. All was done under the pretended resolution of June 5.[2]

The Prince was enraged at the failure of his scheme for the seizure of Amsterdam. The magistrates of the city were magnanimous, and resolved to sacrifice themselves rather than expose the city to a siege and Holland to a civil war. They concluded an agreement with the Prince (who had himself gone to the army), whereby they bound themselves to concur with the six provinces in the state of war.[3] By a separate article, the brothers Andrew and Cornelius Bicker (the one formerly burgomaster, and the other one of the four acting burgomasters) bound themselves to resign all their municipal functions, and to renounce official life forever. The besieging army was then withdrawn. The Prince's end was gained. The towns were dumb with terror.

Jacob de Witt and his five fellow-prisoners were conveyed to the castle of Loevesteyn, in the extreme south-west corner of Gelderland, where they were placed under the strictest guard. It is now that we begin to come upon some direct traces of John. A modern writer states that, in the early morning of the fourth day after the arrest, John forced his way into the castle of Loevesteyn, notwithstanding the Prince's

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[1] Wicquefort, *Histoire*, i. p. 305.

[2] Wicquefort states, as a fact, that more than a month before the troops received orders to march against Amsterdam, a number of merchants had received letters from London and Dantzic speaking of the siege of Amsterdam as a thing imminent, and an event which would infallibly happen.—*Histoire*, i. p. 308. See, also, *Hollandsch Mercurius*, July, 1650.

[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire*, i. p. 314.

imperative injunction that no one should see the prisoners, and, standing by his father's bed, devised means of restoring the violated honor of his family.[1] We have discovered no authority for this statement. On the third day from the seizure, old De Witt writes to his children from Loevesteyn, describing his conveyance to the prison and his treatment there: he had been "accompanied by two companies of troopers and a company of foot," and had been well lodged, "since his arrival, in a good, airy, and well-furnished apartment." He was also at peace in his own mind, being satisfied that he had done nothing but obeyed the instructions given him by the town council of Dort, and had never given his Highness cause of offence. "Be you also," he adds, "of good heart, and do nothing for my deliverance except what is fit and honorable, and have always the fear of the Lord before your eyes." He requests the "travelling clothes and travelling mantle" left behind in the Hague to be sent him, and concludes thus: "Write me what is passing. I hope everything has been arranged in Amsterdam."[2]

This letter appears to have been sent by the governor of Loevesteyn, in the first instance, to the Prince, who, on August 4, wrote to the governor in reply, desiring that all letters written by the prisoners were to be sent to him,[3] and forbidding the delivery of any letters to them. A joint communication (not preserved) by the six prisoners had also been forwarded to the Prince, which he acknowledged on the same date.

John de Witt's first impulse, on the Saturday morning of

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[1] The Heer Vegens in *De Gids*, 1867, p. 11.

[2] In the collection of family papers of Mr. Hoog, of Leyden, to whom I am indebted for a perusal of this letter, which is dated August 2, 1650. Jacob writes that he is "Seer wel geaccommodeert en op een goede luchtige kamer wel gemeubleurt gelogeert. . . . Weest gylieden oock klikmoedig en doet tot myne verlossing niets als dat beehoorlyk en eerlyk is, en hebt altyd de vreze des Heeren voor oogen."

[3] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. 392. The Prince says in his letter to the governor: "Je vien de recevoir votre lettre du 3e avec celle que le Sieur de Witte vous a mise en main; et desire que continuez de m'envoyer de mesme les lettres que ces messieurs voudront escrire, sans souffrir toutefois qu'ils en reçoivent aucune de dehors."

his father's arrest, would probably be to take counsel with Van Andel, the eminent advocate, in whose house he was living. Probably, also, he hastened to Dordrecht, and on the following day (Sunday though it was) may have been instrumental in inducing the Old Raad of that town to pass the resolution they adopted on that day. They resolved to send a deputation to the Prince (then before Amsterdam) to persuade him to release Jacob, the town becoming bail that he would appear for trial; and they recorded in their municipal registers a justification to the effect that De Witt had done nothing but obey the injunctions of the governing body of the town.[1] By the same resolution the Old Raad was even willing to agree to the Prince's terms as to the army, if that would induce him to liberate De Witt. The Prince's departure to Amsterdam had interfered with the proceedings of the deputation; and we think we can again trace the finger of De Witt in an act of indemnity passed by the town, on the Tuesday following (August 2), in favor of his father, "lauding, approving, and confirming all that he had done, and promising to him and his children to help to repair, with all vigor, that which had just happened, and to indemnify him against all injury, under bond of the town and all its goods."[2]

All manner of stories to the discredit of the elder De Witt now began to run through Dordrecht, and local gossips were busy inventing defamatory explanations of his imprisonment. The Old Raad stood firmly by him, and caused proclamation to be made throughout the town that he had done nothing wrong or dishonorable, and that, on the contrary, he had faithfully obeyed the mandates which the magistrates had laid upon him. The aim of the family appears to have been to effect his release through the influence of the governing body of the town or of the States of Holland, and to take no step of their own which would compromise the family honor. The capitulation of Amsterdam, and the ostracism from political life of the Bickers, indicated the conditions under which deliverance might be obtained by the six captives; and the fam-

[1] Quoted by Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 450.

[2] Ibid. iii. p. 451.

ily of one of them, as well as the governing body of his town, put themselves in communication with the Prince, proposing that the prisoner would retire from public life if set at liberty. But thus writes the contemporary Aitzema, who was living in the Hague, where John also lived, regarding the De Witts: "The sons of the ex-burgomaster De Witt, being admonished to make a similar request on behalf of their father, refused, saying, 'They neither desired nor wished, by any act of theirs, to make their father culpable.'"[1] Our first positive trace of John is on August 12, after his father had been a fortnight in prison, when the Prince signed the following order: "I desire that you will permit the bearers of this, the two sons of the Signor de Witt, to speak for two or three hours with their father. The soldiers will remain at the door of the apartment, and the young men are not to be permitted to see any of the other prisoners."[2] Two days thereafter Jacob de Witt executed a deed, addressed, in the language of the time, to the noble, honorable, lord burgomasters, schepens, council, old council, and good people of the Eight, of the town of Dordrecht, which declared that, in consequence of the present condition of affairs, he resigned his municipal offices, without prejudice, however, to the honor and reputation of his family. The personages addressed accepted the resignation "very unwillingly, and to their great sorrow,"[3] and in very delicate terms resolved that the Heer de Witt should never be called upon against his will to serve the town, either within or beyond it.

On the day following this resolution of the Dordrecht authorities, viz., on the 16th, the Prince signed another order of admission to Loevesteyn: "This is to inform you that if the sons or other friends of the Signor de Witt desire to see him, you are to admit them without difficulty, continuing, however, to take the same good care of the prisoners as at present."[4] The Prince was evidently satisfied with De Witt's form of resignation. His object, as he himself has left on record, was

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 450.

[2] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. p. 396.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 452, "Seer ongeren en tot haer groot leetwesen."

[4] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. p. 402.

to place the captives on the same footing of exclusion as the Bickers.[1] The resignation, however, contained no obligation on the part of De Witt to renounce political life forever; but it was implied that the exclusion was perpetual. It is a suggestive parallel to that edict of a few years later by which, under the leading instrumentality of Jacob de Witt's distinguished son, the House of Orange itself was excluded forever from offices in the gift of the province of Holland. Jacob's order of release is dated August 18,[2] after he had been three weeks a close prisoner in Loevesteyn. He was the second prisoner set free, the other four remaining in detention for several days longer.

One letter of John's during this period of imprisonment is extant, and was written to his brother two days before his father's release. It appears from it, as the quotation from Aitzema given above leads us to infer, that the town was the official agent through which the release was effected, the family taking a keen interest in the efforts it made. So scrupulously does the family withdraw from any formal step, that John dissuades his brother from being even the bearer of the order of release, "as many people would say that, not the town of Dordrecht, but we ourselves, through the town indirectly, had treated with his Highness, which, according to my judgment, both for the preservation of our noble lord and father's reputation and the reputation of the land, must in every respect be prevented."[3] Here are inflexibility, thorough-goingness, and a man with an eye to public policy. "The land's reputation" admits us now, for the first time, under his own authority, to De Witt's political standpoint. It is the first phrase remaining to us which tells us his view of the struggle that had been raging around him ever since he came to the Hague nearly three years ago. It means that he believes the attitude of Holland to have been constitutional, and that the Prince has violated the liberties of the province.

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[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. 397.

[2] Ibid. iv. 403.

[3] MS. John to Cornelius, August 17, 1650. *Hague Archives.*

The Prince was now master of the Republic, for six of the provinces were his tools, and he had crushed Holland. Let us see what use he means to make of his power.

Early in 1649, probably in February or March, and therefore eighteen months before the crisis in Holland, he made arrangements for upsetting the treaty of Münster. He sent a secret envoy to Mazarin, with instructions to obtain a promise that, in the event of the six provinces taking arms to compel Holland to agree to their views, Mazarin would send them money and a strong contingent of troops, and at the same time keep Spain in check, if Spain seemed inclined to aid Holland; or, in the event of the six provinces setting themselves up as a separate State, that France would recognize them as such. The envoy was to make known the Prince's desire to renew the partition treaty of Richelieu and to reopen the war with Spain.[1] Throughout the summer of 1650 he was sending mysterious letters to an unknown friend in France, about some subject which he dared not commit to writing, and the last extant letter from his hand is to this personage.[2] But his thoughts were distracted. While he wanted to break with Spain, he also desired to re-establish the Stuarts. If he attempted both, there would be an alliance between poor, unhappy France, torn with its inward dissensions, and at least six of the provinces, against England and Spain, and perhaps against the province of Holland. We have not the Prince's views in these months as to the re-establishment of the Stuarts; but after what we must regard as a hollow proposal of mediation between France and Spain, designed to decoy the Dutch into the war, he arranged the terms of a treaty with the Count d'Estrades on behalf of France, by which the King and he undertook to attack the Spanish Netherlands jointly, on May 1, 1651; to break at the same time with England; to restore the Stuarts to the throne, and not to make peace with

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, iv. 298, '9.

[2] Ibid. p. 404. "Il vous communiquera aussi quelque chose que je ne puis confier au papier; adjoustez foy à ce qu'il vous dira de ma part; . . . Selon vostre response je prendré mes mesures; et je ne puis me commettre sans voir clair à l'affaire, autrement je me perdrois entièrement." Also pp. 407, '8, 418.

Spain except in concert with France.[1] To Mazarin, personally, fighting and fencing with cabals, intrigues, and conspiracies, such a treaty was of the utmost consequence. "If you can induce the Prince to break with Spain," he had written to D'Estrades, "it will defeat all the measures of my enemies, and dissipate the cabals and factions which have been formed in the court and in this parliament against me."

In this arrangement we have, for the third time within four years, a Prince of Orange devising a secret treaty with foreign potentates adverse to the common weal of the people. The chief motive of this third project, as of the first and second, was the personal aggrandizement of the family, to which we must add the snorting of the young Prince for the battle. No true man who understood the times could follow him to the field on such an issue; no true man could see in his motives any interest which called for and justified war. Like his father, this young Prince also had betrayed his trust and the people who loved him and had faith in him. The treaty was a usurpation: he possessed no power to make it; he was violating the constitution. Holland's so-called breach of the constitution had been rudely suppressed, and the champion himself, being now in the saddle, rides roughly over the confederating bond.

Contrast him with De Witt, one of the most constitutional of men. De Witt, throughout his long career, will spend his strength in trying to preserve honorable peace for a nation that does not believe in him, whereas this young, headstrong Prince has been racking his ingenuity, misdirecting his influence, crushing the constitutional voice of Holland, and usurping a sovereign function of the State to lead into a war, with-

[1] *Lettres et Nég. de D'Estrades*, tome i. 99, 100. See on this projected treaty, Basnage, *Annales des Provinces-Unies*, tome i. 189 (who does not question the authenticity of the document); Wagenaar, in his History (who doubts it); Bilderdyk, *Geschiedenis des Vaderlands*, t. ix. p. 29 (who does not refer to it); Professor Tydeman, *Ophelderingen* on Bilderdyk's *Geschiedenis*, ib. p. 253 (who does not doubt it); and Vreede, *Inleiding tot eene Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Diplomatie*, i. 213 (who also believes in its genuineness). The whole drift of the Prince's correspondence in the *Orange Archives* puts it beyond doubt, notwithstanding Mr. Groen van Prinsterer in his *Prolegomena*, *Orange Archives*, second series, iv. 121.

out principle, and a war springing from his own mere love of personal vanity, a people who would have died for him.

But, within eight days after this treaty was projected, the Prince was to enter upon a conflict with another enemy than Spain, that enemy which lies in the path of all mortals. The project of treaty bears date October 20, 1650. He was then hunting in the Veluw, and continued hunting till the 28th, when he became ill, and returned to the Hague. He had been seized with small-pox. Till the evening of November 6, the disease was supposed to proceed favorably, and two of his three medical attendants then left him for a brief interval. He became suddenly worse, and they were hurriedly recalled. It had become evident that the last great conflict was at hand. Some of the clergymen of the Hague had arranged to visit and comfort him alternately during the week; but hitherto they had been politely warned off the premises, being courteously told that there was no need for their services. Either the doctors or the family were afraid lest zealous indiscretion on the part of the clergy might alarm the Prince. But now, in this dire extremity, the preacher Stermont (a violent declaimer against the Arminians and the doctrines of Holland, whose wife had formerly been the subject of a painful scandal in Rotterdam, and who had been transferred to the Hague by the Dowager-Princess of Orange) was summoned to the Prince's bedside. Only once before had he been admitted, and that under the pretence that he had just received some delicious oranges from Rotterdam, which he had come to present, and under a strict caution not to alarm the Prince.[1]

It was Sunday night, not yet ten o'clock, and all the Hague would be soon going to bed, believing that the Prince was doing well. He could only answer "Yes" to one of Stermont's questions, "Whether he was prepared to die, and whether he trusted in the mercy of his Redeemer?" The answer was followed by prayer and another question, to which he had not strength to reply. And so, with Stermont on his knees, praying vehemently and earnestly for the Prince, and the doctors

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 458.

exerting all their skill, in this still and solemn hour the young man's life passed away. Stermont was commissioned to carry the news to his mother; and the English chaplain made it known to the Princess Royal—the latter within a week of the birth of our little Dutch William. Mother and wife hastened to the mansion where the Prince was lying, and met together in this moment of agony and of the shadow of death. And then, says Stermont, "What sighs, lamentations, tears, and anguish! What exclamations of sorrow! No one could hear them without his heart melting within him."[1]

It was all over now, and a new destiny awaited the Dutch people.

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[1] Stermont's narrative of the Prince's last hours is reprinted by Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 457.

Chapter II.

DE WITT BECOMES PENSIONARY OF DORDRECHT.

As throwing important light on the greatest state-paper which ever came from the pen of De Witt (to be hereafter noticed), it is necessary to look at the pamphlet literature of this struggle. Lampoons, dialogues, historical expositions, and solidly argumentative essays streamed from the press. The lying gossip of the hour was freely mixed up with the severest truths, the most trenchant criticism, and the keenest of arguments. Our interest in it lies chiefly in this, that many of them which supported the cause of Holland stated the doctrine of the sovereignty of each province in terms as sharp, clear, and firm as De Witt himself afterward expressed it. And in like manner the doctrine that the Prince was only a private citizen, unless freely and voluntarily elected to an office, was stated as vigorously as the same illustrious statesman ever put it, and this not in one pamphlet, but in scores.

"The seven provinces," said one writer, "are, indeed, united or bound together; but they are not one body, save in the matter of the war which they have carried on. . . . The States-General had no power to authorize any one to overturn the privileges of Holland, or imprison the members of its States, since each province is sovereign in itself. . . . The Prince was a mere stadtholder, and servant of those States to which he was a stadtholder; the States were his masters, and could have discharged him; they were not a parliament, which must separate when it pleased him, but States, which existed of themselves, and knew no one above them."[1] In reading

[1] "Holland's Praetje tusschen vier persoonen." The *Duncaniana Pamphlets* for 1650.

such arguments, it is necessary to remember that they were the common property of the whole Holland faction, if we would realize how little there was original in De Witt's political views, how much he borrowed from his age, and how small was the power of growth that was in him.

Some of the pamphleteers almost exculpated the Prince personally, or extenuated his acts, by adopting the constitutional principle of demanding that only the advisers of the youth, Musch, Aerssens, and others, should be punished.[1] Many believed the Prince to have fallen into bad hands; and trustworthy Aitzema records that he had surrounded himself with French officers, whose views were naturally hostile to peace and the cause of Holland. One notable pamphlet created a great sensation,[2] and so impressed De Witt that he recommended a friend to read it. It put in the most odious light the aim of the Prince's education; it analyzed his motives with the most unsparing incisiveness, and with the most reckless indifference to truth or falsehood. The writer sheltered himself from the latter charge by professing that he was merely reporting the speculations and guesses of himself and many thousands of others in the Republic. As a mirror of the wild fears, the ignorant tattle, and wicked backbiting among some sections of the Holland faction, the pamphlet is invaluable. The Prince, the writer averred, had imbibed the desire of sovereignty with his mother's milk. He had resisted the reduction of the army that he might make himself master of the Republic, and that he might break with Spain, and reestablish the Stuarts on the English throne.[3] To work out these ends he had flattered the preachers, and "they wrote, preached, prayed, and ran before him like slaves."[4] The siege of Amsterdam was to avenge himself chiefly on the Bickers for their opposition to his schemes about the army; but in this he only showed his ingratitude to them, for they had lent

[1] "Amsterdam Journal;" also, "Brief rakende het vangen der Ses Leden." Both in the *Duncaniana Collection* for 1650.

[2] *D'Onstelde Amsterdammer*, Brussels, 1650. The *Duncaniana Pamphlets.*

[3] See "Het rechte derde deel van 't Holland's Praetje," in the *Duncaniana Collection* for 1650.

[4] *D'Onstelde Amsterdammer.*

him large sums of money a few months before, which he had borrowed with the intent of furthering Charles Stuart's expedition to Scotland. He had aimed at making himself master of Amsterdam, and putting a number of jackdaws in the government—creatures of his own, who would say "Amen" to every request he made.[1] He had an eye to looting the bank and the State chest, containing together an incredible number of millions of guldens. It was the Prince who had spread "the devilish lie," as the writer phrased it, that the town had made a treaty with England, in order that he might have an excuse for giving it over to the plunder of the rabble and his soldiers. By the siege he had attempted to destroy the credit and reputation of Amsterdam, which was the centre of the world's commerce and wealth, where much foreign capital was deposited for safety, and on which the existence of those Dutch towns of which Amsterdam was the great market depended. This Amsterdam, too, which gave away £200,000 a year in alms to the poor! "And see whether he has not trodden underfoot the best and chief lovers of our freedom through the whole of Holland, shoved them out of the government; so much so that in nearly the whole of South Holland not one can say 'kick.' See what hangs over our head." It was an attempt "to tread underfoot the sovereignty of Holland, and make us all a laughing-stock before the world. The States may now give up their title of 'noble, great mightinesses,' and of the 'States.' Is it not a scandalous thing?"

Other pamphleteers, on behalf of Holland, argued the question from the necessity of retrenchment, commenting on the enormous burden of taxation and the cost of living.[2] "The poor are now so hardly bested that they can scarcely come by a piece of dry bread. If they want to add to their dry bread a draught of small-beer, which costs only thirty stivers the half cask, nineteen stivers of that sum is duty, so that the duty alone is equal to two-thirds (one stiver excepted) of the whole

[1] This would have been the result had the Prince lived.

[2] "Holland's Praetje." *Duncaniana Collection*, 1650.

cost of the beer. Meat and corn, and other things, are also taxed as much as they can bear, and it is not possible to increase the people's burden. . . . We are eaten up even to the skin and hair, and must drink small-beer instead of good beer, while the poor among us cannot get beer at all, and are compelled to be satisfied with water." The advice given by the writer was—Reduce the army and lighten the taxes: reduce the army, especially as it is an army consisting to a great extent of paper men, names merely which appear in the captains' lists, and whose pay the captains pocket. "It is certain that the companies, which ought to muster seventy men, do not contain more than thirty or thirty-five effectives, to such an extent do the captains steal from the State. . . . If the hundred and five companies which the States of Holland wanted to dismiss were dismissed, the dismissed men could enlist in the companies which were short, so that real men may draw the pay which the captains now pocket in respect of sham or paper men. There would be thus a great saving in money to the State, and the army would not contain a man less."[1]

On the opposite side, the Orange pamphleteers maintained that the office of stadtholder was an integral part of the constitution, and that the States-General had power to constrain a refractory province which wanted to break away from the Union, as Holland was said to do. They declared that the Holland party were all Remonstrants in religion; that they were "Spaniardized;" that the peace with Spain was not to be relied upon; that Popish Spain, from the very nature of Popery, was not to be trusted. Popery was spreading in the Republic, and all sorts of sects were tolerated by the Holland faction. This faction practically consisted of a few families, who were striving to raise themselves into a class of "new

[1] Besides "Holland's Praetje," see also "Het rechte derde deel van 't Holland's Praetje," also in the *Duncaniana Collection* for 1650. The latter pamphlet says that of the 40,000 men nominally in the service of the State, not more than 16,000 men could be actually mustered. After ample allowance is made for exaggeration, there still remains much truth in the complaint. The "giving of a company" was always esteemed a lucrative gift.

patricii," and to subject the many to the intolerable dominion of the few. These few were burgomasters and pensionaries, the latter but the paid servants of the town. As burgomasters had generally the management of all the political business to be brought before the town councils, the burgomasters of the Holland faction were charged with concealing portions of it from the councils, or misrepresenting it, to obtain effect to their own views—a charge which was often true of both sides. The burgomaster was also accused of making himself the lord and sovereign of the town. This was a common charge in these Orange pamphlets. Sometimes the pensionaries are classed along with the burgomasters as having made themselves sovereigns and tyrants in their own little municipal domain. The tendency in all the towns was strongly in favor of the small official clique in power, for the time being, becoming the supreme directors of all the town's business. One lampooner charges the pensionaries with being in the pay of Amsterdam; but political and social gravitation had more to do with their relations to the great city than gold. A coarse logician puts the question, "Who rules Holland?" and answers it thus: Young Gerrard Bicker, a beardless son of the burgomaster, was living at Muyden, of which he was "drost" (loosely translated, "bailiff") at the time of the siege. When he heard of the soldiers being in his neighborhood he fled into Amsterdam. Now, this young Bicker had a maid, Marretye by name; Marretye had formerly been a maid of his father's, and this servant-wench had the credit of ruling Holland. Thus—and the reasoning is worthy of one of Shakspeare's grave-diggers—Marretye ruled the burgomaster Bicker's wife; Bicker's wife ruled Bicker; Bicker ruled Amsterdam; Amsterdam ruled the whole of Holland; therefore, the servant-wench ruled Holland.[1] In this way, by argument and scandal, the Orange writers lauded the Prince's policy, even his conduct toward the six members and Amsterdam, as a policy in favor of liberty. His acts were directed, they said, only against a few who were trying to make themselves masters of their towns

[1] "'t Muyder Spoockje," 1650. *Duncaniana Collection.*

and of their province, and who were trying to muzzle people so that they could not speak.[1]

Knowing the value in argument of a happy nickname, the Orange writers exhausted their wits in devising an opprobrious epithet for the opposite faction. Its members were called the Bickers' faction, the Bickers' malignants (borrowing a term from England), the Bickers' Hollanders, the Bickers' magistrates, and the Bickers' children. The towns in which the faction dominated were called the Bickers' towns, and the troubles were called the Bickers' troubles; but the only one which stuck to them through history was the most contemptuous of all, as it constantly reminded both the world and them of the humiliating insult which the party had suffered in the imprisonment of the six members, namely, the "Loevesteyn faction."

The reputations of many men whose names we shall never have occasion to notice in these pages were freely handled, sometimes with a dull wit, but always with a caustic pen, on both sides; and the current scandals of the hour about them formed a rich mine of wealth for the lampooner. Amidst all this reckless pamphleteering, seeing what his family had suffered, and with a strong provocation to lift his pen, John de Witt stood calmly, a spectator merely. On the day after the Prince's death he was writing a letter, in which there was not the slightest trait of exultation, or, indeed, of feeling of any kind: "Last night, between eight and half-past eight, his Highness the Prince of Orange died. May God have his soul! His ailment appeared so to conduct itself that it was thought all danger was past;" and he proceeds to give a slightly inaccurate version that had reached him of the Prince's last hours: "Others say that his Highness showed great willingness to die, and even that the minister, having said prayers, and having asked his Highness whether he understood the foresaid prayers, and whether he had trust in them, his Highness plainly answered 'Yes,' and shortly thereafter expired."[2] We are here already upon one of the strik-

[1] "Den Ommeganck van Amsterdam," 1650. *Duncaniana Collection.*

[2] MS. De Witt to his uncle Cornelius van Sypestein, November 7, 1650. *Hague Archives.*

ing features of De Witt's character, and it will perplex all students of him through every hour of his career. We never touch upon the living, genuine, feeling man. His life appears as cold and guarded as a mathematical demonstration. Probably he had no deep feeling in him; but we must repeat that it is the misfortune both of him and his biographers that his contemporary countrymen did not write memoirs.

Among the faction generally the Prince's death caused the wildest jubilation. Alms and thank-offerings were dropped into the poor-boxes, with scraps of verse exhibiting the elevation of feeling to which the writers had attained.

> "With Prince deceased
> My gift's increased,
> Ne'er tale cheered more
> Through years fourscore."[1]

Equally boundless was the consternation among the Orange following. In solemn pulpit, at the chattering street-corner, the cry was, "The Republic is beheaded; there is now no king in Israel; the State will fall into discord and confusion, and be 'staved to pieces.'"[2] This was the burden of the Orange lamentation through all the early years of the little Prince (our William III.) who was about to be born, and who saw the light a week after his father's death.

Holland was now free, and with exultant joy the faction felt the throbbing of its new life. It leaped instantly again into the saddle. The Prince had only been dead one day when some of the towns whose members were imprisoned began to cancel the resolutions he had compelled them to take. The reaction was complete.

Jacob de Witt was immediately restored to his former office by the Old Raad of Dort. The two brothers Bickers were

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[1] "De Prins is doot,
Mijn Gaef vergroot;
Noijt blijder Maer
In tachtig Jaer."
Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 458.

[2] Aitzema, *Herstelde Leeuw*, p. 43.

also "redintegrated," as the expression of the time was, and some of the remaining towns had acted even more promptly than Dordrecht. We have a letter from John to his father, written on the Wednesday following the Prince's death, combating a suggestion that his father's redintegration should be delayed for some time. "Delay," wrote John, "would tell against your nobleness's reputation, because in such a case the Old Raad would seem to approve of what had passed, since there is now no reason of violence whereby they could be moved to keep your nobleness out of the exercise of your nobleness's functions." And he concludes by "praying God that this sudden change" (the Prince's death) "may contribute to the welfare and safety of our dear fatherland."[1] John, as this makes plain, has already cast in his lot against the House of Orange.

Members of the faction had been heard to mutter during the Prince's illness that, if he died, there would be no new stadtholder. And when his death came, and when the Orange party found that its legitimate head was a helpless newborn babe, the field was clear before the Hollanders. Ere the aimless and dispirited followers of the princely house had recovered from the stunning surprise and sorrow caused by the Prince's death, Holland issued a friendly manifesto to the other provinces, declaring that the true basis of union among the provinces was harmony, friendship, and mutual confidence (this was in opposition to those who held that the true basis of union was a stadtholder); that they were determined to adhere to the Union of Utrecht, and to maintain the Reformed religion as settled by the Synod of Dort. They also suggested that the strength of the army should be regulated by certain resolutions come to in 1646. Deputations were sent to the six sister provinces to propose a great convocation of the seven provinces, to deliberate on the position in which they now found themselves. These provinces had no alternative but to agree. There was no bitter reference to the past by Holland, and even the deceased Prince was spoken of by

[1] MS. John to his father, November 9, 1650. *Hague Archives.*

the Hollanders with respect. Until the great convocation met, everything was to remain on the footing on which it then was. It was a revolution which was being quietly effected.

See, here, the first practical result of it. Hitherto the towns of each province, according to the old privileges granted to them respectively, by the counts or dukes, or by the liege-lord of the province, had presented to the stadtholder a leet, or nomination list, out of which he selected the towns' magistrates; and if the stadtholder was absent, the choice was made by the Count himself. But now the States of Holland made over to its own towns themselves the final and complete right of appointing their own magistrates. These States were willing to make a selection from a leet if any towns wished it; and when they were not in session, their standing committee, and no longer the stadtholder, was to make the choice.[1] The towns of Holland were in this way made independent municipal bodies for the first time in their history; that is, the complete, elective force was lodged within the town. No extra-municipal force had any legal right to interfere. The privileges (as we would say, the franchise) were not changed. The oligarchy, who had formerly framed the leet, were themselves still chosen, as in the time of the stadtholder. Holland was now a pure communal republic, the commune being, not the body of the burghers of the towns, but a small municipal oligarchy only; and Holland trusted that its example would be contagious among those provinces which the death of the Prince had also rendered stadtholderless.

But an event of greater importance to Holland and its confederates than all this was occurring at this moment and attracted no notice. The secretary to the States-General died: the Pensionary of Dort was appointed his successor, and John de Witt, forsaking the practice of law, was elected to the vacant pensionaryship of his native town. We have no details. We have examined the resolution of the Old Raad appointing

[1] Aitzema, *Herstelde Leeuw*, p. 45; also Kluit, *Historie der Hollandsche Staatsregering*, iii. 231.

him: it is dated December 21, 1650.[1] He took his official oaths, and set out the same day to the Hague with the delegates chosen to represent the town in the States of Holland.[2] He has now begun his career, on a salary, so far as can be made out, of £200 per annum. The appointment has come in time to permit him to take a part in the "great gathering of the States," which will commence its sittings on January 18, 1650, '1.

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[1] MS. Records of the Old Raad, in the archives of the Town Council of Dordrecht.

[2] MS. Records of the Old Raad, Dordrecht. Also *MS. Register of the Resolutions of the States of Holland for* 1650, p. 327, where the first mention of De Witt's name in the proceedings of the States occurs. He is mentioned as taking the usual oaths as a delegate to the States; but the date is not given.

BOOK III.

The Great Convocation.

Chapter I.

THE HAGUE.

The Hague, into which John had originally come to practice law, and into which he had now again come as Pensionary of Dordrecht—'s Gravenhage, the Count's hedge; a little patch of land wrung from the sand-hills which skirt the sea, whereon one of the early Counts had built himself a palace—was the place where the States-General assembled, and where the States of Holland also held their sittings.

The simplest method of viewing the government of the Dutch Republic at this particular time, when there was neither count nor stadtholder, is to start from the municipal unit and to regard the towns as almost entirely sovereign bodies, fenced and fortified with a mass of charters and rights which no power could touch. The small and exclusive oligarchical class, from which the government of a town was chosen, elected delegates to meet representatives from the other towns, to deliberate on matters in which they had a common interest. These representatives in meeting assembled formed part of the "States" of the province. Some unity was given to the towns by the existence, from olden times, of provincial courts of justice, capable of reviewing many of the decisions of the municipal courts; and by administrative machinery devised for carrying on the business of the associated or federated towns, that is, the towns of the province. The remaining part of the Provincial States consisted of the nobles of the province, who represented the rural districts.

These Provincial States in turn elected delegates, who, in their meeting assembled, constituted the States-General. The delegates so chosen were maintained in the Hague at the cost of the province sending them, and they were mere delegates,

with no authority except to register in the States-General the decrees of the province they represented.

The method of voting in some Provincial States was very complex, but in the case of Holland each town had one vote only. In the States-General, also, each of the seven provinces had only one vote. Hence there never could be more than seven votes in the States-General. No limit was imposed upon the number of delegates from any town or from any province; but the number of seats was limited, and if a town or a province sent more deputies than there were chairs for that town or province, the remainder had to stand. The town generally provided a residence for its delegates in the town where the Provincial States met, and defrayed their expenses, and the province did the same for the delegates it sent to the States-General. In the Provincial States the delegates sat in separate municipal groups, and in the States-General the groups were provincial.

Each town had a salaried officer of its own appointment, under the name of Raad-Pensionary, or Councillor Pensionary, or simply Pensionary — generally a lawyer; and it was customary for this pensionary to accompany the towns' deputies to the meetings of the Provincial States, in order to advise and assist the deputies and conduct their business. In the Provincial States he collected the opinions of his group, expressed its views, and announced its vote. It was this office in Dordrecht that John de Witt now filled.

As each town in Holland had a town pensionary, so had each province a provincial pensionary, who, in Holland, was known till 1630 as the Land's Advocate, and thereafter as the "Raad Pensionary" merely, though we in this country have given him the name of "Grand Pensionary of Holland." And as Holland overshadowed all the other provinces, so also its pensionary overshadowed, in influence and importance, all the similar functionaries of the other provinces. He attended the delegates sent by the States of Holland to the States-General, and was, in fact, the hand and head and minister of his province, both in its own assembly and in the States-General. It was chiefly through him that the States of Holland exercised their influence on the other provinces, and on the inter-

nal and foreign policy of the Union. When the stadtholder's office was in existence, he was the organ through which the States of Holland communicated with the stadtholder; and when the office was abolished he was the functionary to whom foreign ambassadors betook themselves, and who corresponded with and advised Holland's members of embassies abroad. As the first minister of the most influential province, he became, if he was a man of ability, the most powerful man, next to the Prince, in the Republic.[1]

The States-General was presided over by a "province" in weekly rotation, the chair being filled by one of that province's deputies; and in the States of Holland the right of presiding travelled round the various towns by weekly succession.

Very few of the men who sat at the tables in the States of Holland when John came up to the Hague as Pensionary of Dordrecht are ever heard of beyond their own country, and most of them have no historical notoriety there. First of all in birth, but not in fame, the Lord of Brederode sat at the table of the nobles, proud of his descent, for he carried the blood of the old Counts of Holland in his veins. He was not by any means a king of men; but he was brave, for he had fought for the Republic all his life-long, striven against Spain, for thirty years and more of hard battle, to help to build up this bit of Dutch freedom. He does the hospitalities, too, on a splendid scale, writing his letters in the first person plural, with something of kingly importance, and altogether living in a kind of regal grandeur befitting a descendant of the Counts. Brederode collected around him all that was gay, and brilliant, and cultivated in the Hague. By a second marriage he had been united to a sister of the Dowager-Princess of Orange, and he stood in close union with the princely house. When De Witt has entered upon public life, a friendly connection will grow up between them.

At the same table of the nobles sat the most notable man

[1] A sketch of the history of the office will be found in an essay by J. G. H. van Tets, *Diss. Hist. continens historiam muneris consiliarii pensionarii Hollandiae.* Lugd. Bat. 1836. See also Cann's *Schets van den Regeringsform der Nederlandsche Republik van* 1515–1795, p. 163. Compare an essay by W. C. Knottenbelt, *Geschiedenis der Staatkunde van Johan de Witt.* Amst. 1862, p. 38.

in all this assembly, the Grand Pensionary of Holland, old Jacob Cats, "Father Cats," as a loving posterity is to name him for evermore. He, too, has been Pensionary of Dordrecht, and since 1636 has been Grand Pensionary of Holland; but his time is past now in the Republic: he has neither the kind of head, nor the liking, nor the years required to rule the inward storm that is at hand. A stronger man is wanted, and will be forth-coming for the crisis, and Cats will retire to the sand-hills behind the Hague, to continue his immortal Tales, and to turn a morsel of the arid desert into a paradise of evergreens and blooming flowers. For long years after him are Dutch peasants to read these Tales; they will sit secure behind Marlborough's impregnable wall, and read them around their hearths in peace, to their wives and children; all through the eighteenth century will they read them, with the same loving reverence with which English peasants, in days almost gone by, read our own Bunyan. "Father Cats" will be a household word in every cottage, and his Tales will be found lying beside the Bible on every peasant's window-sill. Hail to him, the genial, revered, most lovable old man, with his long hair white as snow. In those days of his there were few men in the Republic, and none in this Assembly, as human and lovable as he!

At the same table sat the Baron Obdam, a man not particularly notable. He was now a cavalry officer, but he was to become a trusty friend of De Witt, and when an English bullet shall have pierced the heart of the sea-king Tromp, he will be made Admiral of the Fleet. He is the father of that Obdam who, throughout the long French wars that are to come, will fight by Marlborough's side, and who, one day, will be made a prisoner by French soldiers, along with our own great Duke, upon the Maas.

Another figure, the brain of the Holland faction which had now sprung into power, was Adrian Pauw. All his manhood he had spent in the political service of the State. This is the man in whom the hopes of Holland will centre in the coming crisis, and we shall meet him again. As for the rest, most of them were mere parochial celebrities, whom even the parish has forgotten.

Chapter II.

COMPLETE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE OLIGARCHY.

By the death of the Prince two conflicting principles shot into prominence, and stood face to face ready to try conclusions. The one was Holland's principle of government without a captain-general and stadtholder; and the other was the doctrine of its sister provinces, that the confederation should have a captain-general and each of the provinces a stadtholder. The idea inherent in a commander-in-chief and in a stadtholder was, that they should be men able to discharge the duties of the offices, and not children. Nevertheless, the thoughts of most men turned on appointing the little Prince to these offices, and giving him a responsible lieutenant-general till he came of age. Round the question here stated the war of parties raged, more or less, for twenty years.

About three hundred delegates from all parts of the seven provinces assembled at the Hague in the first fortnight of January 1650, '1, in reply to the appeal of Holland. As the representatives of province after province appeared at the mustering-place, they were received by the oligarchy of Holland with ostentatious manifestations of honor and friendship. It was a fortnight of formal ceremonials, visits, processions of state carriages, bowings all round, and audiences in the provincial assembly of Holland. This was the outside of the business. But, behind the scenes, committees of the oligarchy were ceaselessly at work, by means of private preliminary conferences, sounding each provincial deputation, familiarizing the delegates with the views of Holland, answering their objections, and, if possible, winning them over. Several of the provincial deputations had come up with express orders to insist on the appointment of a captain-general. It was generally believed that Count William, the Friesland stadtholder, and

the general who in August last had led the troops against Amsterdam, was intriguing for the chief office. A section in Zealand was willing to vote for him as lieutenant, or *locum tenens*, during the little Prince's minority. The two women of the leading branch of the House of Orange, the mother and grandmother of the child, who were on the worst of terms with each other, looked upon Count William's independent pretensions to the captain-generalship, as well as the scheme for making him lieutenant merely, as usurpations of the child's "rights." The family was otherwise broken up by jealousies and domestic broils.

Here is a scene which took place three days before the Great Convocation opened. On Sunday, January 15, the little Prince was to be baptized. Already the mother and grandmother had quarrelled about the child's name. The English Princess desired that her son should be called "Charles William," thereby combining her father's name with her husband's; and the grandmother declared that if he was named "Charles," after the beheaded English King, she would not attend the ceremony. The mother yielded, and then another quarrel arose over the question who was to carry him to church. The first arrangement was that he was to be carried by the Princess Albertina of Orange (a sister of his father's), accompanied by the Duke of York, and Prince Edward, son of Elizabeth, Winter-Queen of Bohemia. The young duke, fired with the free-lance life of the Duke of Lorraine, had left Paris on a visit to that duke at Brussels. He arrived at Brussels with empty pockets, got a little money from the duke, and asked his daughter in marriage, and afterward made his appearance in the Hague—again with his pockets empty. He did not foresee what the future had in store for him, that this little child, whose baptismal ceremony he refused to attend, would one day become his son-in-law. He first excused himself on several grounds; then he offered to be the conductor of the venerable Queen of Bohemia, and finally declined altogether to go; some ascribing his conduct to royal pride, and others to the quarrelling of the two princesses. Thereupon the Princess Albertina, feeling insulted, would not carry the child. It

was next proposed that Lady Catherine Stanhope, one of the ladies of the Princess Royal's household, accompanied by one of Brederode's daughters and a daughter of the Count of Dhona, should carry him. But Brederode's wife stepped in, asserting that no daughter of hers—no daughter of the Lord of Brederode, of the blood of the Counts of Holland—should carry the train behind Madame Stanhope; and so Madame Stanhope had to retire. Finally, the little William was carried to church by the Countess of Dhona, with Count Maurice the Brazilian on her right hand and the Earl of Norwich on her left, and the little Prince's train was borne by two of her own daughters and two of the daughters of Brederode.[1]

Meanwhile, during the same afternoon hours, while the long line of carriages was proceeding through the streets of the Hague, another scene was being enacted in the cathedral church. The preacher, Tegnejus, had been vainly endeavoring to obtain a hearing from the multitude which thronged the church. The benches, and every spot which yielded a foothold, were occupied. Representatives from the States-General were there, also from the States of Holland and Zealand, and from some of the towns of Holland. Their seats were covered with black cloth; a carpeting of black was laid in that part of the church set aside for them and in the passages. The preacher's voice was several times drowned by the breaking of seats throughout the church, and the clamor and disorder of the crowd within and without. He stopped frequently during his sermon, and clapped his hands to produce silence, but without result. The crowds of people outside strove to elbow their way in, to stare at the ceremony. Overladen benches inside continued to break, the women to scream, and the men to shout and clamor; while Tegnejus, in despair and dismay, preached on inaudibly through the din, alternately preaching and clapping his hands. At last the baptismal procession appeared, and the Countess of Dhona, with her train, sailed up into the place reserved for them round the pulpit, to the great relief of the preacher, who

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. f. 551.

made their entrance a pretext for breaking off his sermon suddenly in the middle. The ceremony was performed by a clergyman, Lindanus, who named the prince "William Henry." Later in the afternoon deputations, with substantial compliments, waited on the Princess Royal: the States-General presenting the child with a life pension of 8000 guldens (£800 sterling) yearly; the States of Holland gave him a life pension of 5000 guldens yearly; the town of Amsterdam gave 1000 guldens yearly; Delft, 600 guldens yearly; Leyden, 1200 guldens yearly; to be followed, some years afterward, by the States of Zealand with a life pension of 2000 guldens a year.[1] But the purer Republicans could not conceal their dissatisfaction that the little Prince's baptismal robe was trimmed with ermine, as a badge of his connection with a royal house.

The Great Convocation sat deliberating, slowly and ponderously, for eight months, and then finally dissolved. Holland confined its proposals to what it deemed purely federative questions, arguing in favor of the inexpediency of electing a captain-general, and of the desirability of intrusting the command of the army to the holder of the recently-created office of Field-marshal (held by Brederode, whom Holland, by this bribe, detached from the interests of the House of Orange), and suggesting various regulations, both in reference to the army and the civil administration, which would complete the idea of the sovereignty of the individual provinces. But the deliberations shot far beyond the limits to which Holland sought to confine them. Some provinces insisted upon the appointment of provincial stadtholders. Holland replied that this was a question belonging entirely to the discretion of each province. A strong feeling was also manifested by some provinces in favor of the appointment of a captain-general. In Zealand, where the public sentiment ran strongly in favor of filling up both offices, an intrigue had broken out which so alarmed Holland that its States despatched, in April, a deputation to the States of that province to dissuade them from proposing a captain-general and from electing a stadtholder.

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 552.

On that deputation was John de Witt, and, as Pensionary of Dordrecht, he was probably the business man of the deputation.[1] It is not unlikely that the argument presented by the deputation to the States of Zealand against taking either of these steps came from his hand. The document is not remarkable for any special excellence, and is simply a clear and neat epitome of an ampler argument which he found ready to his hand. The deputation returned with a vague answer; but Zealand itself was on the eve of a revolution.

Holland, having an extensive official patronage at command, has the reputation of having carried most of its views by an open-handed bribing of deputies. The net result of the eight months' work of the Convocation, so far as this question of the sovereignty of the provinces goes, is that Holland succeeded in preventing the election of a captain-general. By private manœuvring it dissuaded four of the provinces (itself the fifth) from electing stadtholders. By the arrangements in reference to the army, Holland became undisputed master of that half of the army which it had to pay, every other province being also master of its own proportion. The officers of each section of the army were to be appointed by the province paying that section; the officers and men were to be sworn to obey the commands of the civil authorities of the province; and no province could have troops marched into it, or out of it, or even moved about within it, without its consent. Small as this looks, the gain for Holland was enormous. It was the setting up, for the first time, of a stadtholderless government. It was also a supplementary union, which gave to each province that valued the privilege a guarantee that the army would be no longer officered by creatures of the Prince. No obsequious States-General, however packed it might be by the adherents of the princely house, so long as any one province stood firm, could now trample upon the liberties of the meanest province. No siege of Amsterdam could again be possible without a violation, not of one only, but of several, of the fundamental laws of the State.

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 560; Aitzema, *Herstelde Leeuw*, 135.

Chapter III.

PROJECTED ANGLO-DUTCH COALITION.

The Republican party in England had watched the accession to power of the Republican party in the Low Countries with profound interest; and the alliance of the two governments, as a means of guarding the political liberty which both had now obtained, seemed to England the most natural and necessary of things. When the Great Convocation met, the Parliament resolved to despatch an embassy to the Hague, to propose the establishment of a close friendship between the two countries.

The state of feeling in the Netherlands was at this moment favorable to the Parliament. Charles Stuart had just been crowned King of Scotland at Scone; but Cromwell was master of all the Scottish Lowlands, and Charles's outlook was not bright. The Scotch privateers which he sent out inflicted great injury on Dutch shipping; and the stronghold which the Royalists had established in the Scilly Isles was the terror of all merchantmen passing along the Channel. The Dutch sent a remonstrance to Charles, and a ship of war to the Scillies; and when it was known in the Low Countries that the Parliament intended to despatch an embassy to the Hague, Holland and Zealand, who were most deeply affected by the Royalist privateers, induced the Great Convocation to resolve that any ambassadors from the Parliament would be received with due honor. It was also agreed that, meanwhile, Joachimi, laden though he was with years, should return to England, this time carrying credentials as ambassador from the States-General to the Parliament.[1] Charles's resident, Macdowell,

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 637; Carte's *Collection of Original Letters and*

now that Boswell was dead, immediately demanded an audience, and attempted in vain to frighten the Convocation from its purpose. The days were altered for the Stuarts.

The Parliament did not wait for Joachimi, but sent a sumptuous embassy to Holland. It was March $\frac{17}{27}$ when the Lord Chief-justice St. John and Walter Strickland drove into the Hague. The members of the Stuart family and the leading Royalist exiles retired from the town, that they might not witness the humiliating spectacle: the youthful Duke of York betaking himself to Breda, and Resident Macdowell to Friesland.[1] The ambassadors, splendidly apparelled, had driven up from Rotterdam, under wet skies and over pasty, yielding roads, and they reached the Hague as the sad, moist evening was closing in, at six o'clock. Their suite numbered 246: the young English Republic was resolved on doing its embassy bravely.[2] They were received by deputies from the States-General, and led in procession, with five-and-twenty carriages flanked by English footmen in livery, each with a drawn rapier in his hand, through the principal streets of the town. So great a change had six months wrought! Last August, this same Strickland, after begging a year and a half in vain for audience from the States-General, had almost slunk out of

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Papers, February $\frac{12}{22}$, 1650, '1: "M. Joachimi, albeit he had his credentials ever since the first of this month, is still here, staying until M. de Bellievre shall arrive from France, in order to know what he will propose, but chiefly to see what may be the King's success in Scotland," i. 404. Again, under date February $\frac{15}{25}$, we read: "Upon some intimation from the agent of the States now in England, certifying the King's good condition, and the great distraction among the rebels, the States here have caused Joachimi to demur a little," i. 407. Also on March 1, 1650, '1: "M. Joachimi is still here, and some say he goes not until the ambassadors arrive from England; but most true it is that the States are desirous first to speak with M. de Bellievre, and to see, if it may be, the success of his majesty's affairs in Scotland," i. 416.

[1] Carte's *Collection*, Hague, March $\frac{5}{15}$, 1650, '1: "The Duke of York is desirous of going to Breda, as he is unwilling to be here when St. John . . . arrive," i. 419. See also ibid. 425, and Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 638.

[2] MS. *Minutes of the Council of State* (State-paper Office), March 4, 1650, '1: "The plate that is now prepared for the service of the Commonwealth, after being weighed and inventoried, to be delivered to the lords ambassadors who are going to the United Provinces, to be made use of by them there during their extraordinary embassy," p. 57.

the Hague; and hearing, at Helvoetsluys, of the siege of Amsterdam and the arrest of the six deputies, he had hurried on board the Parliament ship which was awaiting him, lest some misfortune should befall himself.

Peaceful and unpeaceful Dutch citizens crowded the muddy streets to witness the pomp of the new Republic, for news had travelled up from Rotterdam of the imposing magnificence of the embassy. The Orange section of the people greeted the procession, as it passed, with cries of "Cromwell's bastards," "King's murderers," "English hangmen," and the like; the Lord Chief-justice St. John, who was sitting in Brederode's carriage, which was borrowed by the States-General for the occasion, looking darkly on.[1]

This reception in the streets by the populace of the Hague aroused suspicion and alarm among the suite of the embassy. The residence set aside for the ambassadors had only eight rooms, so that the suite of 246 had to find sleeping accommodation where they pleased. With this portentous muttering in their ears, they were fastidious in their choice of lodging-places; they would not board anywhere save in companies of five or six, and the more distrustful of the retinue slept for the first night in their clothes.[2] During the day they would not venture abroad into the streets except in companies of eight or nine; and gentlemen, and even footmen and servants, invariably appeared in the streets with their sheathed rapier in their hand or lying over their arm—a habit of wearing the weapon strange to the Dutch, and smacking, as they thought, of suspicion and fear. Holland promptly issued an edict, forbidding within its bounds all insults to foreign ambassadors under pain of death.

The official receptions and ceremonial dinner being over, St. John and Strickland were conducted by representatives from the Great Assembly, in a procession numbering thirty-eight carriages, and attended by a guard of musketeers, to receive their first audience. There was no want of pompous, ostentatious courtesy with these provincial oligarchies now;

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 638.

[2] Ibid. iii. 638.

and it must have been a moment of triumph to Strickland to be conducted at last to an audience with all this ceremonial equipage. And if a little display on the side of the ambassadors was to help their cause, that, too, was not to be wanting. Both were clothed in black velvet; the mantle of St. John was lined with cloth of gold, his waistcoat was adorned with tinsel loops, a gilt rapier hung at his side, and a band of diamonds sparkled round his broad-brimmed Puritan hat.[1] If the ambassadors, as they alighted from their carriage, had looked round the quadrangle of the Binnenhof, in which stood the meeting-hall of the Assembly, they would have seen that the windows of one of the residences of the Princess Royal were crowded with the faces of her domestics — men and women, muttering and chattering, the reader may imagine what. Those expert in discovering coincidences observed that the little Prince was seized with convulsions the same day, "as if the presence of ambassadors from the enemies of his grandfather, Charles I., excited an unhealthy influence over him."

We have not been able to discover the first instructions with which St. John and Strickland came to the Hague, but some supplementary instructions exist which were sent them by the Council of State.[2] Let it be understood, however, in general terms, that their object was to propose, in all honesty, a complete coalescing of the two Republics, for the protection of their common Protestantism and their common Republicanism.

It happened that, just about the time that St. John (for he was the main figure in the embassy[3]) was beginning the real business of the negotiation, news was received in London that Tromp had appeared before the Scillies with a Dutch fleet. The solitary ship which had been sent out had failed to obtain

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 639.

[2] Public Record Office, MS. *Order-Book*, and "MS. *Foule Order-Book*" *of the Council of State*, 1651. The "Case of St. John," written after the Restoration, and to be found in the British Museum, throws no light on the real object of the embassy.

[3] Whitelocke's *Memorials*, 487: "Mr. Strickland was an honest, rational gentleman, and versed in the Dutch business; but St. John was looked upon as the principal man."

satisfaction from the Royalist corsairs of Scilly, and Tromp had been despatched to the Isles to seek a rougher justice. The English Parliament did not know that the privateering and plundering by the Royalists had exercised a potent influence on the reception of Holland's proposal fittingly to welcome any English embassy that might be sent, and it would not have mattered much if the Parliament had known. When the government of the Commonwealth learned that Tromp was advancing against the Scillies, even though they were in Royalist occupation, its action was swift and suspicious. Notwithstanding the scheme of a complete coalition, Blake, who was about to sail for Barbadoes, was ordered to the Scillies, and Aiscue, with his squadron, was instructed to place himself under Blake's command. Blake was to inquire of Tromp the cause of his being there, and was not to depart until he had received such an answer "as might be for the honor and interest of England." "If, from his answers or otherwise, you shall discover that he hath any intentions to do aught that may be prejudicial to the honor or interest of this Commonwealth, you are to require him to desist from it. And in case he shall persist therein, you are, by the best ways and means you can, to enforce him to it." But Blake was cautioned to do nothing which would destroy the good correspondence between the two countries, and he was to assure Tromp that the Parliament had no intention to protect the corsairs against the just claims of the Dutch. The instruction implies that the Parliament would have no objection to a combined operation of the two fleets for the reduction of this Royalist stronghold.[1]

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[1] MS. *Order-Book of the Council of State*, April 1, 1651, p. 197 and (same date) p. 200; and April 17, 1651, p. 279. The instruction to Blake of April 1 says: . . . "Whereas we are informed that Van Tromp is sailed towards Scillies with a fleet of ships; you are to demand of the said Van Tromp for what purpose he is come thither, and what his intention is to doe at the said islands; and if, from his answeres or otherwise, you shall discover that he hath any intentions to doe ought that may be prejudiciall to the honour or interest of this Commonwealth, you are to require him to desist from it. And in case he shall persist therein, you are, by the best ways and means you can, to enforce him to it. . . . And, to the end that nothing may be done on our parts that may interrupt the good correspondency between the Commonwealth and the United Provinces of the Netherlands, you are

St. John had come determined to make short work of the negotiation; but his excess of wariness frightened the Dutch and prolonged it. He proceeded on the principle, somewhat Socratic in its character, of advancing one proposition at a time, and getting a categorical acceptance or rejection before proceeding a step farther. His first proposition was presented on $\frac{\text{March } 24,}{\text{April } 5,}$ to a committee appointed by the Convocation to receive the communications of the embassy. The article tendered the "friendship" of England, and "propounded that the amity and good correspondency which hath anciently beene between the English nation and the United Provinces be not only renewed and preserved inviolably, but that a more strict and intimate alliance and union be entered into by them, whereby there may be a more intrinsical and mutual interest of each in other than hath hitherto beene, for the good of both."[1] Nobody understood the drift of this, and the question everywhere was, What does this "more strict and intimate union" mean?

The Dutch committee asked for the specific terms of this union, which the wary St. John would not as yet give. It was time enough, he argued, to advance to these when it was ascertained whether the Dutch government desired or rejected a close friendship with England. Did they desire it, or did they not?

The Dutch were perplexed. It was a new blow at the Houses of Stuart and Orange; every one felt that, and Holland, of course, would not object; but what lay beyond?

After four days' cogitation the Convocation replied, and St. John's quick eye perceived that his object was lost: "We do

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to signify to the said Van Tromp that, by requiring him to desist, it is not the intention of this Commonwealth to protect those who are now in possession of Sillie in the wrongs they have done the Dutch, or to hinder them righting themselves upon them, soe as they act nothing to the prejudice of the honour or interest of this Commonwealth, but shall be ready to give them all assistance therein, and expect the like from them in what you are there to execute."

[1] MS. *Narrative of the Negotiation by the Ambassadors*, State-paper Office, vol. *United Provinces*, 1651; also MS. *Resolutien, Groote Vergaderinge*, April 5, *Hague Archives*, where the committee's report of the conference is given; also Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 657.

also, on our part, offer the friendship of this State to the Republic of England, and are not only inclined to renew the amity and correspondence which, from olden times, has existed between the two States, and inviolably to maintain the same, but also to make a treaty with the Republic of England over the common interests."[1] Friendship on the old terms was thus accepted, but the new "more strict union" than had ever been before was tacitly rejected. St. John endeavored to convince the committee, who brought him the Dutch article, that it was not a reply to the English proposal; and, after much discussion, they returned to the Assembly, and reported that the ambassadors required an unambiguous acceptance or rejection of the article submitted. The same evening the Convocation was adjourning for its Easter recess, and it instructed its secretary to prepare, during the holidays, a rejoinder to this objection of the ambassadors, the chief object of which, again, was to bring out of the ambassadors some disclosure of the alliance they contemplated. St. John insinuates that the Assembly made the recess a week longer than usual, under the pretence that the opinions of the various towns could not be obtained in a shorter time.[2]

The ambassadors had now been a week in the Hague, and the angry growl of evil omen which greeted them on their arrival had settled into habitual and studied insults. The door of their residence was constantly beset by ill-intentioned idlers; their windows were frequently broken; their servants were often assaulted. St. John himself was supposed to have narrowly escaped assassination; one of his suite escaped strangling because the noose that was attempted to be flung over his head caught his wig, instead of himself, thus allowing him to take promptly to his heels; and a riot broke out in front of their residence, between the rabble and some of their retinue, in which the rabble had to be dispersed by Dutch soldiers.[3] Prince Edward, son of Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bo-

[1] MS. *Resolution, Groote Vergaderinge*, April 6, *Hague Archives;* also MS. *Narrative of the Ambassadors*, State-paper Office. [2] MS. *Narrative of the Ambassadors.*

[3] Carte's *Collection*, i. 427. Sir E. Nicholas writes to the Marquis of Ormonde, on March $\frac{1}{2}\frac{2}{2}$, 1650, '1:

hemia, meeting the ambassadors and their suite in the streets, had jeered them, threatened them, called them "rogues," and their servants "dogs," and treated them with other forms of contumely. The ambassadors complained to the States of Holland, demanding the punishment of the offenders; and they also reported the treatment they were receiving to the English Council of State. The States of Holland ordered the guilty parties to be proceeded against, and the English Council of State issued a special instruction to demand reparation for the affront offered them by "Prince Pallatin Edwards."[1]

The Council of State obtained information about Tromp's advance upon the Scillies and the affront to the ambassadors on the same day. Hence the swiftness and suspiciousness of their action. The two events acted and reacted on each other. In addition to the order to Blake, already cited, an instruction was immediately despatched to the ambassadors to require the States-General to declare clearly the purpose of the fleet, and to recall their instructions to Tromp, so as "to avoid all occasions of disputes and differences between the two States." We have in this document the nature of the apprehensions and the grounds of the action of the Council of State. Tromp was at the head of from ten to fifteen ships: he had declined to receive any message from a Parliamentary vessel; and he remained in the vicinity of the islands, refusing to "discover his clear intentions" to any one. But the Council of State had been informed that he meant to compel satisfaction for the injuries to Dutch commerce, "without any limitation of means, whether by possessing himself of those islands or other-

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"These ambassadors from the English rebels are generally much maligned, insomuch that their followers, though very brave, cannot walk the streets but they are, by boys and women, as well as by men, especially Dutch, French, and Germans, affronted and railed at in the streets." See, also, to the same effect, in letters of April 5 N.S. and April $\frac{9}{19}$.

[1] MS. *Order-Book of the Council of State*, April 1, p. 197; also April 4, pp. 217, '18, Public Record Office. Whitelocke's *Memorials*, p. 491. The minute of the Council of State authorizes "the committee which treats with the Embiado of Portugall . . . to prepare an instruction for the lords ambassadors of this Commonwealth now in Holland, to bee sent unto them for the demanding of a satisfaction for the affront offered unto them by Prince Pallatin Edwards."

wise, and to seize upon all ships whatsoever going in or coming out of that place, whereby just cause of jealousy is given to the Parliament."[1]

We now see what Blake was to do. Tromp might avenge himself upon the corsairs, but he must not touch a ship sailing under the flag of the Commonwealth, nor must he attempt to take possession of a rood of English soil.[2]

While the Great Convocation was yet in its Easter recess, the rulers of Holland heard from London—probably from the watchful, ambiguous Schaep—that Portugal and the Commonwealth were on the point of concluding a treaty. This was a

[1] MS. *Instruction to the Ambassadors*, *Order-Book of the Council of State*, April 3, 1651, pp. 207–'9. Whitelocke's *Memorials*, p. 491, where we read, "Van Tromp came to Pendennis, and related that he had been at Scilly, to demand reparation for the Dutch ships and goods taken by them; and, receiving no satisfactory answer, he had, according to his commission, declared war against them."

[2] The *Instruction to the Ambassadors* referred to is an important document. It requires that the ambassadors shall signify to the States-General that the islands of Scilly, or Sorlings, are, and have anciently been, a part of the territories belonging to the Commonwealth of England, and were in possession of Parliament, and were kept for them by a garrison paid by Parliament, until the same were betrayed, by those who ought to have defended them, into the hands of the enemy; and although the possession of them is now *de facto* in the hands of those who pretend to keep them against the Parliament, yet the right of them is in the Commonwealth of England, and, by God's blessing, not out of the power of the Parliament to reduce to their obedience, whenever they shall judge the opportunity fit to attempt the same. The ambassadors were further instructed to inform the States-General that Tromp had arrived there with a fleet of ten or fifteen ships; that he declined to allow a boat from the English fleet to come on board of him; that he continued "near the islands without discovering his clear intention, pretending that it is to procure satisfaction for the injury done by the garrison of these islands, and by ships belonging thereto, but with instructions, as we are informed, to compel such satisfaction without any limitation of means, whether by possessing himself of those islands or otherwise, and to seize upon all ships whatsoever going in or coming out from that place, whereby just cause of jealousy is given to the Parliament." The ambassadors were to declare that this proceeding was understood by the Parliament to be disagreeable to the amity and friendship between the two States; they were to require the intention of the States-General to be clearly stated, and to obtain an assurance that the fleet would do nothing to the prejudice of the English Commonwealth; and that, until then, the instructions to Tromp be recalled, to avoid all occasions of disputes and differences between the two States, "the Parliament having thought fit to give orders to their fleet not to suffer the said Tromp, or any other, under the said former pretences, to act anything to the prejudice of this State in honor or interest."

powerful spur to several of the provinces to push forward the negotiation with St. John; for the Provinces were at the point of rupture with Portugal, and Portugal might be immensely strengthened against them by an English alliance. Holland's heart, it is true, was not in this Portuguese quarrel. It was the Dutch West India Company's quarrel, and the great Holland merchants would willingly have seen the Company collapse. The Company was a Zealand venture, got up by Zealand out of provincial jealousy of Holland's great East India Company, and from a desire to create a counterpoise to the overwhelming influence of Holland. Its history was an almost unbroken record of imbecility and mismanagement, the only bright page in which was the administration of one of the Orange counts, Count Maurice[1] (called therefrom "the Brazilian"), whose salary Zealand, with its ledger-ideas, grudged, and after whose clear and victorious rule the Dutch conquests in Brazil went floundering on, through personal spites, misunderstandings, jealousies, and imbecility, deeper into chaos, until now nearly the whole territory had passed into the hands of Portuguese adventurers; and the Provinces themselves, on the instigation of Zealand, were on the brink of war with Portugal. It was against the instincts and selfishness of Holland to enter into war to rehabilitate Zealand's moribund Company; but it consented to help the Company, on the principle of something given for something got.

As this *quid pro quo* carried important consequences during the English war, which was about to break out, it is necessary to explain it. In March, 1649, Ulefelt had arrived in the Hague, as ambassador from Denmark, with the object of putting an end to the long feud which had existed between Denmark and the United Provinces on the subject of the Sound tolls. He proposed, as a simple solution of all future difficulties, that, instead of each ship paying its own toll as it passed through the Sound, the Provinces should pay down a lump sum annually to Denmark, whereupon Dutch vessels would

[1] There is an interesting report from Count Maurice, on the condition of Brazil, preserved in our own State-paper Office, *Holland Papers* for 1643.

have the right of running through the Sound free. Holland caught eagerly at a scheme which offered it the means of placing its foreign commercial competitors at a great disadvantage, provided it could bind needy Denmark not to grant a similar privilege to any rival, but rather to maintain the tolls against all other nations at their then amount. Needy Denmark at once assented.

The scheme, as we have said, carried in its train great political consequences. It meant that, in the troublesome Northern question, the Dutch would have to change sides: would have to discard Sweden, their old ally, and unite themselves with Denmark, their old enemy. It also implied that Sweden would look around for new friends: what if she turned herself to the young and vigorous English Commonwealth? That Commonwealth had a vital interest in the passage through the Sound; and, moreover, Denmark was friendly to the Stuarts and unfriendly to the new Republic. The scheme virtually placed both Sweden and England in a position of hostility alike to the Danes and the Dutch.

But the treaty, though formally arranged in October, 1649, could not be completed. Several of the provinces would not ratify it—not from a dread of either Sweden or England, but out of revenge, because Holland would not give its sanction to certain pet schemes of their own which they were anxious to carry through.[1]

The matter hung in this uncertainty till March, 1651, when Zealand renounced its opposition to the Redemption Treaty, as it was called, in exchange for Holland's renouncing its opposition to the rehabilitation of the West India Company. This was one of the common phases of the Federal government—a province, with a scheme which it could not carry, setting itself obstinately against some scheme of another province, stopping all government, till it obtained its object. The treaty was ratified in March, 1651.[2]

When the Convocation met after Easter, Holland made use of the information it had obtained from London, about an al-

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 338.

[2] Ibid. iii. 654.

liance between Portugal and England, to frighten Zealand into a vigorous prosecution of the negotiation with St. John. The sluggard movements of the Convocation could not be overcome. After waiting a week, St. John himself took action, and requested a categorical answer to his proposition.

Not till April $\frac{17}{27}$ did the reply of the Assembly come: "We will not only renew, and observe inviolably, the good amity and correspondence which existed in olden times between the English nation and the United Provinces, but also enter into a nearer and more intimate alliance and union, whereby they may better find their reciprocal interest than hitherto hath been."[1]

Here, at last, was an affirmative answer, but not sufficiently warm and hearty to satisfy St. John, who read beneath the surface. Waiving all objections, however, he proceeded a step farther, and handed to the Convocation two more articles.[2]

The first intimated that the Parliament would give advantages corresponding to what it would ask, and invited the Assembly to state what it, on its side, desired.

The second requires quotation. "We propound that the two Commonwealths may be confederated friends, joyned and allyed together for the defence and preservation of the libertye and freedomes of the people of each, against all whomsoever that shall attempt the disturbance of either State, by sea or land, or be declared enemyes to the freedome and libertye of the people living under either of the said governments." This ought to have been a tempting bait for the Holland oligarchy. It ought to be clear that if that province ever stood in danger again from the House of Orange, it would have the English Republic at its back! But even Holland could not make up its mind on this proposal.

Two spectres rose up before the eyes of the Dutch: first, the confederation would annul all their treaties with foreign powers, except such as England might approve of; and, sec-

[1] MS. *Resolutien, Groote Vergaderinge*, April $\frac{18}{28}$, *Hague Archives;* MS. *Narrative of the Ambassadors*, Public Record Office; Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. f. 658.

[2] April $\frac{17}{27}$, Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 658.

ondly, it would drag them into the war of the Commonwealth against Scotland and Ireland.

The two articles had scarcely left the ambassadors' hands when St. John and Strickland were recalled by the Parliament.[1] They had now been a month in the Hague, and the insults of the Orange and Stuart parties had not abated. Prince Edward had escaped from the Hague unpunished, and there was no serious search made for him. Week after week reports of the treatment they experienced from the populace accompanied their reports of the progress of the negotiation. The Council of State had replied that they were to insist on the apprehension and punishment of Prince Edward; and toward the end of the fourth week, being satisfied that a coalition was hopeless, the Council ordered St. John and Strickland to return home.

The Holland faction at once moved the Convocation to appeal to the ambassadors not to go. The venerable Father Cats and two members of the States of Holland were deputed by Holland itself to see the ambassadors, and assure them of "the constant and firm resolution of the province of Holland to enter into a strict alliance with England, without the least hesitation or delay." St. John complained of the insults offered to the Commonwealth in the persons of its ambassadors; of the chief offenders being still unpunished; of English rebels and fugitives making the Provinces a base for fomenting the Scotch and Irish wars; and he persisted in his determination to obey the recall. Holland prayed that the ambassadors would at least remain until they could send instructions to Commissioner Schaep in London, to request from the Council of State a revocation of the order. On the same evening, it carried a resolution through the Convocation appointing a

[1] Whitelocke, p. 492. "The truth was that the lord ambassador St. John was irritated against the States by the affronts offered to them at the Hague, and not punished; and he had little hopes of despatching the treaty with them according to his mind, especially as to his proposal of coalition. He, therefore, sent his judgment to his private friends in Parliament, who swayed the House; and, as unexpectedly there as elsewhere, the House passed their vote for recalling the ambassadors from Holland."

deputation from that body to entreat the ambassadors to remain. Holland had been examining the old relations between England and the Low Countries, and had discovered a treaty of 1495, under which Perkin Warbeck and his followers had been expelled from the Low Countries. It thereupon obtained from the Convocation a resolution that the closer union should be founded on that treaty.[1] A special messenger from Holland was immediately despatched to London, to obtain a prolongation of the ambassadors' powers. Secretary Thurloe accompanied him, on behalf of St. John and Strickland, that the Parliament might be correctly informed, by its own ministers, of the state of the negotiation. They were captured by a Scotch ship, and retaken by a Parliamentary one, on the way.[2]

The recall of the ambassadors made the House of Orange and its followers exultant. It was now the Princess Royal's turn to be a little triumphant. Every day her Royal Highness and her brother, the Duke of York, who had returned to the Hague, rode slowly past the ambassadors' residence, with ostentatious pomp and an imposing suite, staring at the house, from top to bottom, in a manner to encourage the rabble, which her procession gathered up in its way, to commit an insult. A warning also reached the ambassadors from Rotterdam that the Royalists there were conspiring to murder them —not improbable, looking to the fate of Doreslaar in the Hague, and of Ascham in Madrid. They drew the attention of the States of Holland to the insulting nature of the Princess's processions. The sterner Republicans in the Holland States wanted to instruct the Princess and her brother to leave the Hague during the visit of the ambassadors; but the proposal was modified into a request to the Princess Royal

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[1] $\frac{\text{April } 22,}{\text{May } 2,}$ 1651.

[2] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, June, 1651. MS. *St. John's Narrative*, State-paper Office. St. John, in his *Narrative*, says that an "ambassador" was sent by Holland. Aitzema is correct in saying that a messenger merely was sent with a letter to Schaep (Aitzema, *Saken*, 659). Schaep obtained an interview with the Council of State on $\frac{\text{April } 28,}{\text{May } 8,}$ 1651. MS. *Order-Book of the Council of State*, Public Record Office.

and the Queen of Bohemia to keep their dependents in order.[1]

The Council of State consented to allow the ambassadors to remain forty days longer.[2] It also authorized them to proceed on the basis of the treaty of 1495; but they were still to ask the Convocation whether, besides the union which the example of that treaty suggested, the Provinces, in addition to the "confederacy perpetual" which it established, would not consent to a "further and more intrinsical union," the nature of which was only to be declared after an affirmative answer was obtained.[3] Meanwhile, St. John also had turned to the old treaty, and had translated and adopted its fundamental articles as to the expulsion of rebels, and was ready on the first day of the forty to submit his further proposals to the Assembly.

The essence of these further articles, seven in number, was that both parties were to "refuse" all aid to the rebels or enemies of the other; nay, they were to do more, they were to "hinder" any one within their jurisdiction from rendering it. This, if carried out, would prevent the Stuart exiles from supplying the Royalist cause with succors of war. Further, any person officially declared by either Commonwealth to be its enemy was to be ordered to withdraw from the territory of the other, if he was within it, under pain of death; and nei-

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 659.

[2] MS. "*Foule Order-Book*" *of the Council of State*, p. 110, containing the draft answer of the Council to Schaep's application, made four days previously. It is entered after the minute of the meeting of May $\frac{7}{17}$, having been omitted in the proceedings of May $\frac{2}{12}$. Public Record Office.

[3] MS. *Instructions for the Lords Ambassadors, Draft Order-Book of the Council of State*, May 3, 1651, p. 95. It is necessary to look at this document to ascertain what the Council of State and St. John's parts in the negotiation relatively were. "You are to demand of them whether, besides the confederacy perpetuall therein propounded, to be agreed upon with the corrections and amplifications mentioned, they doe not intend a further and more intrinsicall union; which if they do declare they do intend, and shall also have consented unto the matter of the six first articles in the second of those instructions mentioned, you shall then declare unto them the nature of that more intrinsicall union mentioned in your instructions from the Parliament, and conteyned in the sixth article of your private instructions from the Council of State of February 28, 1650, '1," etc.

ther the Prince of Orange (little William) nor his mother, the Princess Royal, "nor any other person" was to be permitted to harbor any declared enemy of England in any of their towns or castles, under pain of forfeiting, not only the castle or town in which the enemy was harbored, but "all the castles, towns, villages, lands, and other places which they, or any of them, shall at such time have by any title whatsoever." Under this, no Scotch commissioner could again appear in Breda to lay the foundations of another Scotch war. The articles are a close paraphrase of the old treaty, the clauses of which are simply adapted to the new times. Their phraseology is startlingly comprehensive, since it permitted the Commonwealth of England to declare the Prince of Orange himself its enemy, and to require his expulsion from the Provinces.[1] Nevertheless, the Dutch committee, when they perused the articles, replied that they were so close a transcript of the treaty of 1495 that they needed no discussion! They would lay them, for instructions, before the Convocation.

Holland had been doing its utmost to mollify the ambassadors. They had been invited to Amsterdam, and were sumptuously regaled by the magistrates there. Prince Edward, who was still out of the Hague, was summoned before the court by sound of bell; one Orange lackey was imprisoned, and another was banished.[2]

Still, this was not that coalescing of the two States into one which England intended, and it now behooved England to defend its own interests, imperilled by the Redemption Treaty with Denmark. Nothing will set the effect of that treaty upon English interests in a more comprehensive light than the terse language of the instruction which the Council of State sent to the ambassadors in the first week of the forty days:

"Whereas, the trade of this nation, through ye Sound into the Baltique Sea, is of very great concernment, both in respect of the usefullness of the commodityes brought from thence, soe necessary, among other things, for

[1] MS. *Narrative of the Ambassadors*, Public Record Office; also Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 660. Articles presented by the ambassadors on May $\frac{10}{20}$.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. pp. 659, 660.

building and rigging of shipps, which it is not convenient wee should only receive or not, at the pleasure of other nations; but more especially in regard of the great number of ships we have employed in the transportation of those bulkie goods, whereby marryners are bred, and they and our shipping maintayned; and, being also but short voyages, are often at home, to be made use of in case of any publicq^e occasions of the State requiring their service; And whereas, this trade being very much weak'ned otherwise, is in danger to be wholly lost by ye agreement that hath been lately made betweene the King of Denmarke and the States-General of the United Provinces, wherein they have not only made an agreement for themselves, but, by the . . . article of that agreement, have bound up that King y^t he shall not grant the like to any other nation; which is directly contrary to the third article of the treaty had with the late King of Denmark concerning the customs of the Sound, and by him confirmed, under his hand and seale, the 2d day of June, 1646, a coppie whereof is herewith transmitted; you are therefore to demand of the States-General, and insist, that, notwithstanding of the said treaty of theirs with the King of Denmark, tending so apparently to the destruction of so considerable a trade of this nation, the customs there may be left in that indifferency to this nation as they were before that treaty, that this Commonwealth be not necessitated to use other meanes for the freeing of that trade from that destroying mischief which is upon it by ye said treaty."[1]

From May $\frac{1}{2}\frac{0}{0}$ to June $\frac{1}{2}\frac{0}{0}$ St. John waited without an answer to the seven articles, thirty of the forty days being now expired. On the latter date a Parliamentary ship of war sailed into one of the harbors of Holland to take the ambassadors back to England on the fortieth day.[2] St. John imagined the delay arose from a desire to procrastinate until the issue was seen of a decisive battle in Scotland (until the "Scotch mist," as he called it, was dissipated), which the Royalist resident Macdowell had prophesied of in the beginning of the year, but which Oliver could not get General Leslie to fight. St. John was both just and unjust to them here: unjust because he over-estimated the powers of action which the Dutch governing machine possessed—a machine capable only of slowly lumbering through its work. The Dutch deputies, however, had not been idle. They had prepared a draft treaty of thirty-

[1] MS. *Order-Book of the Council of State*, May 9, 1651, p. 121 (Public Record Office).

[2] MS. *Narrative of the Ambassadors*, and Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 663.

six articles; and this fact St. John knew, as he had, through some private channel, procured a copy while the draft was still under deliberation. During the long blank, of which St. John complains, the draft had been slowly filtering down from the Convocation to the seven Provincial States; and from the seven Provincial States farther down to the town councils. It had to be debated there, to come back again to the Provincial States, where the discordant opinions of the town councils had to be reconciled; and thence to the Convocation in the Hague, where the discordant opinions of the Provinces had to be brought into agreement. Such was federalism, as it had organized itself among the Dutch.

The arrival of the Parliamentary ship stirred the Assembly and the States of Holland once more into action, and six of the provinces met in conference to put the draft of the thirty-six articles into final shape. It was delivered to the ambassadors on June $\frac{14}{24}$—four days of the forty only remaining. The articles proposed a "nearer alliance, confederation, and union;" mutual defence; the preventing of any one in their respective countries from doing anything to the prejudice or damage of the other; mutual assistance, with men and ships, against "notorious or known" enemies of the other; that no assistance of any kind be given, or be permitted to be given, to the rebels of the other; and, finally, an array of stipulations relating to commerce. The thirty-six articles left to English rebels the right of asylum in the Provinces; they also stipulated that the United Provinces should take no part in the Scotch war; and they made no special provision against any aid, or countenance, or harboring by the House of Orange of declared rebels and fugitives. St. John pointed out the discrepancies between his seven articles and these thirty-six. "Banish everybody," was St. John's proposition, "whom England shall declare to be a rebel." And the committee replied, "We cannot banish from our soil all persons who are banished out of England. Our country is a refuge for the exiles of all nations."[1] This was less than the treaty of 1495 had granted

[1] The language is St. John's. He ascribes it to the Dutch. See his MS. *Narrative.*

to England. With the assertion of this lofty principle, the negotiation was virtually at an end.

Nevertheless, St. John did not quite yield. Formally, he had obtained neither acceptance nor rejection of his seven propositions, and he now pressed for the one or the other. Three days only of the forty remained. He told the Assembly that, if they would consent to his propositions, he had power from the Parliament to make proposals of the highest consequence for the welfare of the two Republics. Next morning—the thirty-eighth—the Convocation met at seven o'clock, to consider the terms of an answer. St. John asked for an audience for the fortieth day, to take leave of the Convocation. Thereupon followed renewed resolutions of the Assembly entreating him to stay. St. John was inflexible. The Royalist resident, Macdowell, now appeared upon the scene, and requested that the negotiations with the ambassadors should be broken off; but no notice was taken of him:[1] he and his king were alike harmless. The slowly laboring Convocation on the thirty-eighth day produced an answer, with some concessions, which did not satisfy St. John. The vital point was still unyielded, that those whom England should declare its enemies must not be harbored in the Dutch Republic, under strict penalties against every one who disobeyed. On the thirty-ninth day there was another conference, and no agreement. St. John, still fighting hard to achieve his end, proposed that the old Perkin Warbeck treaty of 1495 should be renewed as a preliminary treaty, until the thirty-six articles could be leisurely disposed of. The proposal was met by a multitude of excuses. The Dutch wanted their thirty-six articles accepted; they were even eager to have them accepted. They desired to send another ambassador to the Parliament to ask for a further extension of leave, to which the inflexible St. John, seeing that his point was lost, would not listen.

On the fortieth day, exactly three months after their entry into the Hague, the ambassadors took their farewell audience

[1] MS. *Resolutien, Groote Vergaderinge*, June $\frac{18}{28}$, 1651, *Hague Archives.*

of the Convocation, and handed in a memoir, exonerating themselves from the failure of the negotiation. At midnight (Strickland in bed) a counter-exoneration was handed to St. John, who was not yet in bed, by the secretary of the Convocation, which St. John could not then read, as it was written in Dutch. But he told the secretary that he hoped the United Provinces would continue, by an embassy in England, the work he had begun in the Hague.

Yet one more communication from the Assembly before they went. It was a French translation of that Dutch reply which St. John could not read, and was sent after them by express all the way to Zealand, and delivered to them on board their ship when it was under sail for England. And still another! It was a proffered gift of gold plate to each of the ambassadors, of the value of 10,000 guldens (£1000), as a token of their embassy, which, however, they refused.[1]

Before a week had elapsed, the Convocation, under the pressure of Holland, consented to the despatch of extraordinary ambassadors to England, to renew the negotiation, on the basis of the thirty-six articles. Characteristically, it required six months to get the ambassadors sent off.[2]

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[1] MS. *Resolutien, Groote Vergaderinge*, July 17, 1651, and February 7, 1652.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 658, reflecting, in his curt way, on the failure of St. John's mission, remarks: "Een vuyr dat sterck brandt, is haest verteert, doet oock lichtelyck schade: maer 't scheen wel datse haer hadden veel anders van desen Staat ingebeeldt als sy 't bevonden. Sy considereerden met dat de hooge huysen van Orangie ende Nassou een groote aenhangh hadden van de Gheemente, die met haer eerste melck hadden ingedroncken de groote daden die deselve aen desen Staat, tot vast-stellinghe van dien, hadden gedaen."

Chapter IV.

DE WITT'S INFLUENCE ON THE CONVOCATION.

The watchword under which Holland had convoked this Great Assembly was "love, unity, and harmony"—a pledge of its willingness to forgive the wrong to which the six provinces had been a party. But let us see what characterized the close of its deliberations. It happened that venerable Father Cats—seventy-four years old now, and seeing that the official work under the new order of things would exceed his strength, feeling also that he wanted some time for meditation before closing his eyes forever—had been importuning Holland to relieve him of his Grand Pensionaryship. "It is fit," said the old man, to whom life was daily growing more solemn, "that between the noise of the world and the stillness of the grave some time should be granted me, in order to make myself fit for the last journey. I have lived much longer than any of my relatives before me; and it is necessary that the irksome office I have held for eighteen years—growing hourly more irksome—should rest on younger and stronger shoulders. Give me, then, an easy place in the chamber of finance; it may be for a year, a month, or only weeks."[1] Holland was dilatory, and would willingly have kept him in his office. The good old man, impatient of the delay, took with him one day, to the meeting of the States of Holland, all the secret papers intrusted to his safe-keeping, among which was a document presented by Prince William, after the siege of Amsterdam, explaining the "reasons and motives" of his conduct at that crisis. That paper, to avoid discussion, had never been opened by the States of Holland, but had been put, in its seal-

[1] *Resolutions of Holland*, May 20, 1651.

ed state, into the hands of Father Cats for preservation. When the old man now presented it, and asked what was to be done with it, some thought it should be destroyed unread, and others insisted on knowing its contents. It was read; and being found to asperse a number of the delegates, and to impeach Amsterdam, the wrath of the governing party in Holland was kindled afresh.

A counter-document was immediately prepared, stating the case of Holland in the recent contest; a resolution was passed in the States of Holland, declaring such deputations as that which the Prince had headed from the States-General, not to the States of Holland, but to the towns of Holland, an infraction of the sovereign rights of the States of Holland, and prejudicial to freedom of deliberation among the towns themselves; the States-General were called upon to expunge from their records the resolutions under which the Prince had acted, as having been passed without instructions from the municipalities, and without even their knowledge—as, therefore, illegal; and a resolution was also passed by the Holland States declaring the attack on Amsterdam and the arrest of the six deputies to have been an attempt against the freedom, highness, and sovereignty of the province. Clerks and officials were placed under examination, with a view to discover the Prince's advisers. It was found that Musch, erstwhile secretary to the States-General, and Aerssens, of Sommersdyke, who sat on the bench of nobles in the sovereign assembly of Holland itself, had been implicated in different ways. Musch was by this time sleeping quietly in his grave, far from these troubles, his greedy hand no longer itching for gain. "I would rather be his heir in this world," wrote this same Sommersdyke to the Nassau William, on the night of Musch's death, "than his conductor into the next."[1] He had drafted some of the Prince's official papers, perhaps this report itself, relating to the attack on Amsterdam; and the Lord of Sommersdyke had commanded a regiment on that occasion. It was treason, in the eyes of Holland, that a member of its own sovereign body

[1] *Archives de la Maison d'Orange*, second series, v. p. 14.

should have taken part in an attempt to suppress the liberties of the province. Sommersdyke pleaded that he was also an officer in the army, bound to render unquestioning obedience to his general. Holland curled its lip in scorn at the subterfuge, remembering that his father had libelled and pasquilled Oldenbarneveldt to the scaffold, and been the bitter enemy of the creed of Holland to the hour of his death; and that this younger Sommersdyke had been one of the chosen confidants of the deceased Prince.[1]

The towns whose deputies had been arrested again passed acts justifying their deputies, and declaring, in their own way, that the Prince's aspersions were false. The young De Witt may or may not have had the framing of the new declaratory Act of Dort—of that we know nothing; but it is improbable that he would consent to undertake the duty. The States of Holland also declared, in solemn resolution, that these six members had been guilty of no wrong. Friesland (whose stadtholder was implicated as commander of the besieging army, but had now a covetous eye on the captain-generalship, and was personally interested in the whole affair being buried in oblivion) strove to throw oil on the troubled waters by proposing, in the Great Convocation, a general amnesty. Yes—Holland would grant an amnesty to all not belonging to its own province; but the traitor Sommersdyke was its own subject; he had acted against the high rights of Holland, and him it would judge. Groningen joined Friesland in crying for an amnesty. Conciliatory conferences followed, but Holland stood by its point, and the harmony and work of the Great Convocation appeared to be on the eve of being upset. Friesland protested that it would be guiltless of all the consequences of Holland's obstinacy, and its deputies announced they would leave the Convocation at the end of the week. Some even wished to declare the whole proceedings of the Convocation null and void. Milder counsels prevailed, and

[1] Carte's *Collection*, ii. 45, Sir E. Nicholas to the Marquis of Ormonde, dated Antwerp, July $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{1}$, 1651. "The Heer van Sommerdyk, who is one of the ablest, richest, and worthiest persons among the States." Again: "In this persecution Barneveld's faction are most eager"—ibid.

Sommersdyke was beseeched to make a private pacification with Holland. He, therefore, through the bench of nobles, and the nobles through Cats, stated that he would absent himself from the States of Holland till permitted to return, provided he was included in the amnesty.

John de Witt was one of a committee appointed to consider how the amnesty might be arranged in order that the Great Assembly might break up in peace. On the recommendation of that committee, Sommersdyke, who was also to be amnestied,[1] was to banish himself from the States of Holland till allowed to return. With the passing of the amnesty, the resolutions under which the Prince had acted were expunged from the records of the States-General;[2] and the Assembly ended with an oration from Cats, a thanksgiving day, firing of cannons, ringing of bells, and blazing of bonfires.

What influence John de Witt exercised over the deliberations of this Assembly is not known. In Aitzema's record of the proceedings his name is mentioned, only casually and indifferently, twice or thrice. In the portentous official record, which exists in none but a MS. form in the Hague archives, and much of which we have examined, his name occurs oftener; for there were endless deliberations in committee, of which Dordrecht and its Pensionary and delegates had to bear their share. A number of letters to him from a Zealander of Middelburg, with whom he now began to carry on a branch of that wide correspondence which was ultimately to ramify itself through every province of the Confederation and every country in Western Europe, and to develop itself into mountainous and unmanageable proportions, gives us this authentic glimpse, that he had labored earnestly to bring the amnesty about. "I cannot longer refrain," writes this Zealander to him, in August, 1651, "from informing your nobleness with what pleasure and contentment we have learned, both from letters and by mouth, from some of our deputies and friends, that your noble father and your nobleness yourself have endeavored, in the Provincial States of Holland,

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 600.

[2] Ibid. iii. 597.

with so much wisdom, prudence, moderation, and temper, to induce their noble great mightinesses the States of Holland" to accept the proposal for a general amnesty.[1] Again, on September 2, the same correspondent writes: "Among those who have helped forward the good work of establishing concord in the Republic, we indeed hold the most distinguished to be your nobleness and my lord your noble father, who, as blessed instruments, have helped to contribute to this blessed work with such great wisdom, moderation, and zeal."[2]

This meagre glimpse is all we are able to glean, from the available manuscripts and contemporary histories of the time, of De Witt's actual influence on this great gathering. If there had been a Boswell by his side, or a chatty French memoir writer, we should have seen it all very differently. We have only the official records of the business done, and ponderous, political Aitzema to help us. In both, he and his personal work are lost to view under the vague abstractions of "committee," "municipal government," "States of Holland," or "States-General." The life and soul of these proceedings may lie rotting unknown in private or municipal archives; their inner history is not to be found in the official records, nor in the archives of the House of Orange, nor in any document known to be extant.

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[1] MS. *Hague Archives*, letter from Justus Huybert to John de Witt, August 3, 1651: "Ick kan mij niet langer onthouden uwe Ed. bij desen te notificeren hoe dat wij met`een orgroote aengenaemheyt en contentement bericht werden soo bij brieven als bij monde van eenige van onse heeren en vrunden hoe dat myn heere uwe Ed. vader en uwe Ed. met soo grooten wysheit, voorsichticheit, moderatheyt en getempertheyt syn agerende inde vergaderinge van de Heeren Staaten van Holland ten eynde hare Ed. Gro. Mo. moghten werden geinduceert, om mede nevens de andere ses Provincien te willen amplecteren en aennemen het concept inde conferentie conciliatore opt papier gestelt tot een generale amnestia," etc.

[2] Ibid. MS. letter from Justus Huybert to John de Witt, September 2, 1651. "Onder de welcke wij wel houden de voornaamste te zijn uwe Ed. ende mijn heer uwe Ed. vader die als gesegende instrumenten met soo groote wysheit, moderatheijt, en ijver tot soo gesegende werck hebben holpen contribueren."

BOOK IV.

THE FIRST ANGLO-DUTCH WAR.

Chapter I.

RESIGNATION OF CATS.

After four months' importunity, venerable Jacob Cats was finally released from his office of Grand Pensionary of Holland.[1] As he rose to leave forever that table where he had rendered eighteen years of faithful service, the old man's heart gave way within him. He fell upon his knees in the midst of the States of Holland, and raising his feeble-growing hand to Heaven—that hand that had written the homely tales that every Dutch peasant loved to read—offered an earnest thanksgiving to God, and implored a blessing on the rulers of his fatherland.[2] Then the solemn farewell came, and he passed forth from their midst with the loving benedictions of all.

But not yet to his sand-hills behind the Hague, and the balmy restfulness for which he yearned. One more service he has to do for Holland. His white hair and the appealing burden of his years will not save him from a cruel winter journey to England, at the head of that embassy which the Provinces are getting slowly ready, to establish some brotherly love, if he can, between the two Republics.

The mantle of the retiring Grand Pensionary fell upon the shoulders of Adrian Pauw, Lord of Heemsteede, incarnation of the doctrines of Holland. Heemsteede had already been Grand Pensionary of Holland, and had been jockeyed out of office, as too staunch a Hollander, by Aerssens of Sommersdyke (father of the young ostracized Aerssens), henchman of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange. He was now growing

[1] MS. *Resolutien van Holland*, September 27, 1651.

[2] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, September, 1651, p. 105; also MS. *Resolutien van Holland*, September 27, 1651.

old. He had fought all the political battles he wanted to fight, had been in active harness for forty years, and was now serenely exalted, above all the conflicts of time, in the presidency of the chamber of finance. He reluctantly descended from his serene elevation into the stormy arena of battle again; stipulating that the office he was vacating should return to him when his period of Grand Pensionaryship, generally five years, was over, and (remembering Oldenbarneveldt's fate) that an act of indemnity should be granted him before entering on office.[1]

Let it be noted here that, while several names were proposed, and several more thought of but not proposed, the name of the young De Witt was not among either number. He had been nine months in the States of Holland; his reputation was doubtless slowly making way; but there is not a vestige of authority that would warrant us in saying that he was even beginning to make much mark among his fellows.

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[1] MS. *Resolutien van Holland*, October 2, 1651.

Chapter II.

DRIFTING INTO WAR.

The famous Navigation Act, with which St. John is credited, was intended to destroy the great carrying trade of the Dutch, and was the first indication of the new temper of England after the failure of the negotiation. If there was to be no coalescing of the two Republics into one State, no treaty even of brotherhood for the preservation of their common Protestantism against all Europe, and of their common Republicanism against the two families who had placed it in jeopardy, why, then, said England, let there be none; in which case each must trust to itself, and nourish its own strength, whatever may be the cost to the other. The civil wars had disorganized English commerce, and St. John's Navigation Act, while destroying the Dutch, would restore the English, trade by sea. Dutch writers, and some English, ascribe it to the vindictive malice of St. John. Vindictive it may in part have been, but it was the result also of the long accumulating commercial rivalry of the two countries.[1] However impossible in the present conditions of society, it was a measure of singular necessity and supreme importance for England at that junc-

[1] The principle of the Act was no new idea. So far back as August 19, 1624, for example, the merchants of London were agitating, with the view of getting the export of, at least, herrings, in strangers' ships, stopped. Admiralty MS. 12,496, British Museum. The first Prohibitory Act of 1646 enacted that "no foreign ship shall export goods from any of the ports of the plantations of Virginia, Bermuda, Barbadoes, and other places in America;" and a further Act was passed in 1650, prohibiting all foreign ships whatever from either importing goods into, or exporting goods from, the plantations of America, except with a regular license. Lindsay's *History of Merchant Shipping*, ii. 183. St. John's measure, generally identified with the name of Cromwell, was a further and complete development of the same principle.

ture. The Dutch treaty, which bound Denmark not to reduce the Sound dues in favor of any other nation, was quite as selfish; it was, in fact, rapacious, and a much less justifiable device of the Hollanders to enrich themselves. Its result was to cripple the commerce and power of England. The Navigation Act showed that more than one could play at diplomatic quarter-staff, and that the friendship of England was of some value to the Dutch.

Although there were several old standing grievances between the two countries, some of them dating from the early part of the century, St. John's return was not followed by a balancing of accounts; from which we may infer that the Parliament was not desirous of quarrelling with the United Provinces. In certain letters of reprisal issued by the late King, of which his Majesty had suspended the execution, and which were now renewed by the Parliament,[1] and in this Navigation Act, lay enough for the present purpose. The Act declared that all imports into England or its colonies must be conveyed exclusively either in the vessels of England itself, or in the vessels of the country where the produce grew or the goods were manufactured. The Dutch had virtually neither produce nor manufactures; and their extensive maritime trade was a mere carrying agency between a foreign producer and a foreign consumer, with, it might be, intermediate storage of the goods in their own ports on the way. They had eleven hundred ships upon the sea, engaged in carrying other nations' produce or goods up and down among the various countries of the world. What proportion of these eleven hundred ships was engaged in the English trade cannot be estimated; but not a Dutch vessel could now visit an English port except with the scanty manufactures and produce of the United Provinces themselves, or in ballast, merely to carry off English goods. A great amount of the Dutch commerce was thus annihilated. And, under the letters of marque, armed vessels were fitted out under the English flag, and Dutch ships were seized wherever they could be found, and brought up

[1] See Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 741.

for confiscation before the English Admiralty. These two destructive influences were in full operation when the Dutch ambassadors, who had at last got under way, landed at Gravesend, on the Dutch Christmas Day of 1651.

It had taken all the time between the departure of St. John in June and this closing week of December to prepare the instructions of the embassy and launch it. It consisted of Cats, Gerard Schaep (Holland's late quasi-ambassador in London, who had rebelliously returned without leave), and Paul van der Perre, men the English equivalent of some of whose names (cat and sheep) were to furnish London, by-and-by, with some coarse humor. The Navigation Act had been more than two months in force when they arrived.

The Dutch government did not at this moment suspect the Parliament of hostile intentions. Their ambassadors were received with every mark of honor; they were welcomed in Gravesend, led in a procession of state barges up the river, amidst salvoes from the forts, the sound of trumpets, and other ceremonial demonstrations; and were landed at Tower Hill amidst the acclamations of thousands of people.[1] Unfortunately, the ambassadors did not rest satisfied with requesting the cancelling of the Act of Navigation, the indrawing of the letters of reprisal, and the release of the vessels which had been captured under them and were awaiting sentence; they also put in a claim for reparation; to grant which was to admit that the Parliament was in the wrong. The Parliament would neither recall the Act of Navigation, nor release the vessels, nor stop the processes against them in the High Court of Admiralty, nor make reparation; but it suspended the reprisals until further orders, on the ground that such acts of hostility would be inconsistent with a negotiation for a treaty of friendship.

Seven weeks[2] passed in demands and claims by the ambassadors for reparation, and as yet the main business of the treaty had not been begun. St. John had commenced his ne-

[1] MS. *Verbael of Cats, Shaep, and van der Perre's Embassy*, Hague Archives; also Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 699.

[2] December $\frac{15}{25}$, 1651, to February $\frac{11}{21}$, 1651, '2, MS. *Verbael by the Ambassadors.*

gotiation in the Hague by proposing the main article of his treaty, and adding one or two claims as quite a subordinate and subsidiary thing. Here, however, were seven weeks "lost," as the Parliament afterward called it, in persistent demands for indemnity above all things! What! have we English, then, no claims against you? was the as yet unspoken feeling of the Parliament. What of Amboyna? What of Poloroon? What of our murdered ambassador? What of the unpunished insults to St. John and Strickland? What of the treaty rights of 1619, out of which you have robbed us? What of this hurtful clause in the Sound tolls treaty? If it is not to be a brotherly fusion between us, but a money accounting between us, by all means let it be so, and let strict justice be done!

During these seven weeks of bungling—in the fifth week—Holland had appointed,[1] out of its own States, a committee on English affairs, at the head of which stood Dort, on whose Pensionary, John de Witt, was laid the burden of the committee's business. While the ambassadors and the States-General were to carry on their formal correspondence with each other, this Holland committee, independently of the States-General, was to correspond with the two trusty Hollanders on the embassy (Cats and Schaep), and to inspire them with the views of Holland. De Witt was now in a position to become the guiding genius both of the ambassadors and the committee.

The refusal of the Parliament to stop the Admiralty proceedings against the captured ships produced considerable indignation among the mercantile community of the Seven Provinces. "Such conduct," writes De Witt to one of the

[1] On January $\frac{15}{25}$, 1651, '2; MS. letter from De Witt (without date) to one of the ambassadors (*Hague Archives*). The passage of the letter translated into English runs thus: "The States of Holland, taking into highest consideration the business of the English negotiation, have, on January 25 last, deputed commissioners, into whose hands shall be placed all the letters which arrive from England, and who from time to time shall examine the same, draw out the points for deliberation, present these to the States, and give the States their opinion; in which commission the town of Dordrecht has the honor to stand first; and on me, although destitute of the capacities and qualities required for the work, is laid the charge of managing the foresaid business."

ambassadors, "appears certainly not to give the best introduction to a good alliance, and is taken up here not without dissatisfaction and uneasiness, especially as it is deemed that the letters of reprisal have been issued without any foundation in the world."[1] The dissatisfaction here referred to had developed rapidly into a desire for the equipment of a powerful fleet for the protection of trading vessels, which were grievously harassed by the French as well as the English; and De Witt, in the same letter, informs the ambassadors that the Provinces were zealously considering proposals for the further protection of commerce, and that the inclination appeared to be to equip and send to sea, as soon as possible, thirty more ships of war, and very soon thereafter twenty others.[2] It will be perceived how one thing is begetting another, and how, unconsciously, both governments are drifting into war.

And, now, observe how the feeling grew during the next fortnight. The merchants of Zealand, enraged at the losses they had suffered under the letters of reprisal, desired a great fleet to be sent to sea to protect commerce.[3] They stirred up the States of their own province, who despatched an extraordinary deputation to the Hague, to propose the issuing of counter reprisals.[4] De Witt thus describes the irritation to his correspondent in England: "I perceive the inclination for the equipment of a fleet is at present greater and firier than I have hitherto intimated to your nobleness; and the representatives of Amsterdam, along with the deputies of some

[1] MS. letter of De Witt to an ambassador in England, February 9, 1651, '2 (*Hague Archives*): "Soodanige bejegeninge en mannieren van doen scheynt voorwaer de beste aenleydinge niet te geven tot een goede alliantie, en werden alhier met sonder misnoegen en becommernisse opgenomen; te meer alsoo de voorz. brieven van repressalien geoordeelt werden sonder eenig fondament ter werelt gegeven te sijn." He proceeds: "And, so far as we can see, the business should be presented thus," and so on into minute details, which scarcely a Dutchman would now read.

[2] MS. letter of De Witt to an ambassador in England, February 9, 1651, '2 (*Hague Archives*).

[3] Whitelocke's *Memorials*, p. 528. "March 24. In many parts of Zealand the people are so mad against England that it is dangerous for an Englishman to be among them; but in other places they are in a better temper."

[4] *Resolutions of Zealand*, February 22 and 24, 1651, '2.

other towns of Holland, speak of a fleet of 100 to 150 ships being brought into sea as quickly as possible; and proposals have also been submitted in the States of Holland as to the providing of the necessary means, but were postponed in consequence of the small attendance."[1] In this way the war-storm was gathering.

The Parliament, urged by the owners of the ships themselves to bring the proceedings in the High Court of Admiralty to a close one way or another, instructed the Court to proceed; and the vessels and their cargoes were condemned. In the Seven Provinces the belief now prevailed that the Parliament was driving matters to a rupture. Holland had already comprehended the situation: we can see this in the projected addition of the extraordinary number of 150 ships of war to the fleet. And De Witt's clear eye perceived, in a war between the two Republics, the ruin of both. The following is a notable sentence from another of his letters: "The business of England gives rise to anxious deliberations, and we here [we in Holland, who for nine years have kept the States-General more or less securely bound in the chains of an unwilling neutrality] had expected more friendly treatment at the hands of that Republic [seeing that—however much Zealand suffers—it is chiefly Holland's ships which are being now seized and condemned]. It is, however, to be hoped," he goes on to say, "that the English government will not be so blinded as to seek our mutual ruin, which, as I think, in case of rupture and hostilities, is to be feared not less for them than for us; so that I have still good confidence that this not too pleasant beginning will be crowned by a good and firm alliance."[2] It is clear that if this man were autocrat in the

[1] MS. letter of De Witt to an ambassador in England, February 23, 1651, '2; also letter from De Witt to Secretary de Huybert, of Middelburg, February 24, 1651, '2; *Hague Archives*, Lias, 1652.

[2] MS. letter to the Heer Schele, of Overyssel, February 24, 1651, '2; *Hague Archives*, Lias, 1652. In this letter he thus describes the feeling as to the equipping of a fleet: "The work of protecting our commerce is taken keenly up by the States of Holland, and preparations are made with great zeal, and it is believed that in a short time a very considerable power will be sent to sea. Nothing is positively resolved as yet, as the States of Holland are in recess for a few days."

United Provinces the forth-coming English war would be nipped in its bud.

The next steps in the history of the ambassadors' negotiation are the presentation, on February $\frac{11}{21}$, by the ambassadors to the commissioners appointed by the Parliament to receive their communications, of the old thirty-six articles; the passing of a formal resolution by the States-General, on $\frac{\text{February } 22,}{\text{March } 3,}$ to add 150 ships of war to the existing fleet, "for the security of the sea, and the preservation of the shipping and commerce of the United Provinces;"[1] and the intimation by the ambassadors, according to instructions forwarded to them, of this resolution to the English Council of State,[2] as well as to other foreign Powers.[3] The intimation might either pass for a friendly act, or a judicious hint to the English government not to carry matters with too high a hand. England received it as a threat that the negotiations were to be carried on under armed pressure, and that its sovereignty of the sea would be disputed. "We merely let the English know," replied the Dutch ambassadors, "that we are fitting out a further fleet of 150 vessels of war; but there is not the least intention in the world against anybody; we only desire to protect our commerce;"[4] to protect it, however, against you English, unless you are civil.

This great projected increase of the Dutch fleet was, in the eyes of the English government, nothing less than a preparation for war. The government of the United Provinces, on the conclusion of the peace with Spain in 1648, had sold many of their ships of war, and not a few of them had passed into the hands of their old enemy. The fleet had thus been reduced to forty ships. In May, 1651, they ordered thirty-six ships to be added to the forty, the better to protect their commerce

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[1] MS. *Resolutien van de Staaten General*, March 3, 1651, '2, p. 160.

[2] MS. *Verbael of Cats, etc.'s, Embassy;* Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 702.

[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire*, ii. 125.

[4] MS. *Verbael* of the ambassadors, and Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 702: "Dat daer Ho. Mog. tot maintenue van haer vrye navigatie ghemeent waren, in zee te brengen hondert vijftigh Oorlogh Schepen, behalven die sy alrede in zee hadden; met expresse protestatie, daer mede in 't minste niet gesint te zijn om eenighe geallieerden ofte Neutralen, veel min die van Engelandt het minste leedt daer mede te doen; maer alleen te conserveren haer vryen eygen Navigatie."

at sea.[1] The 150 now ordered would raise their navy to 226 vessels of war, which might well give the English Republic concern.

These immense and, on the face of them, warlike, preparations, were ordered before the Council of State had had time to reply to the thirty-six articles. It was now their turn to retort upon the Dutch with demands; but they also produced, at the same time, a not unfavorable commentary on the thirty-six articles.[2]

The English demands made the sky look very electric. They were, first, reparation to the company trading to Muscovy, for injuries sustained from the Dutch in Greenland, in 1618, demanded in vain by King James, amounting to £22,000; second, that the surviving murderers in Amboyna, in 1623, be brought to justice—a demand made in vain by both King James and King Charles; third, reparation to the English East India Company, and the other Englishmen who had suffered loss and injury from the Dutch in the East Indies since 1619, estimated by the Company at £1,700,000—likewise demanded in vain by both James and Charles; fourth, that Poloroon, and such portions of Poolaway as belonged to the English at the time of the treaty of 1619, be restored; and that the English East India Company receive a third part of all the spices for twenty years to come, being the period during which they had been violently kept out of the advantages of the treaty, also demanded in vain by both James and Charles; fifth, reparation for depredations committed, at Brazil, on the ships *Concord* and *Marie and John*, amounting to £42,000, and on other ships, of which a list was to be delivered; and, sixth, reparation for damages to English ships, according to a list furnished in 1645. The Parliament also complained regarding the partial proceedings of the Dutch ambassadors sent to England in 1643 to mediate between the King and the Parliament; regarding the privilege of audience

[1] De Jonge, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Zeewesen*, tweede deel, eerste stuk, p. 25.

[2] The English demands and the English Council of State's commentary on the thirty-six articles were delivered to the ambassadors on March $\frac{15}{25}$.

in the States-General, which had been invariably granted to the King's resident in the Hague and persistently refused to the representative of the Parliament; that the murderers of Doreslaar were still unpunished; that Prince Edward and Colonel Apsley were also still unpunished for their affronts to St. John and Strickland, "in which particulars the honor of the Commonwealth appeared to be very much concerned." The document closed with the statement that the English should have the right of trading with all parts of the East and West Indies not belonging to the Dutch, in accordance with the right common to all peoples.[1] Not one of these claims had arisen since St. John's embassy a year ago, and they might have been proposed then, but for the desire for a brotherly union. They will now only be settled by war or brotherhood, and such brotherhood as England wants is impossible for the Dutch.

The ambassadors suggested that they should proceed, in the first instance, to collate the thirty-six articles, with the commentary of the Council of State thereon. "No," emphatically replied the Council of State; "you began with claims. For seven weeks you unremittingly pressed demands upon us before you presented your thirty-six articles. We must first have a settlement of our demands, which are a matter of right and justice, and touch our honor."[2] The Council of State was losing temper, and its replies were immoderately charged with wormwood and gall. It agreed, however, until the answer to its demands arrived from the States-General, to proceed with the comparison and collation of the thirty-six Dutch articles, and the English commentary thereon. At a meeting with the ambassadors, the articles which were not objected to were passed, and those that required debate were noted down for discussion. Meanwhile, the many-headed government in the Hague, plucking some hope of a peaceful solution from the

[1] MS. *Verbael* of the ambassadors, under date March 25, 1652.

[2] MS. *Verbael*, under date April 30; also MS. Reply of the Council of State, dated $\frac{\text{April 27,}}{\text{May 7,}}$ 1652, given in Appendix 26 to the *Verbael*. "Looking to your own practice since you came here in making demands for restitution and amends to some of your countrymen touching the ships, we thought you would have been able to give us some answer," etc.

fact that the thirty-six articles were now fairly under examination in England, proceeded to consider the English claims and the commentary on the thirty-six articles. De Witt, as the mouth-piece of the committee on English business in Holland, proceeded to inspire his correspondent in England with the views of the committee and of Holland. He had now had seven months' experience of the many-headed government, and finding that it was leaky, that papers which should be kept secret got blazoned abroad, he wrote that he would contrive to make a verbal, instead of a written, report to the States of Holland of his committee's opinions on the English commentary; and so to manage that the report to be made in the States-General should also be verbal, "in order that no copy should find its way to places where it may prove injurious to this State."[1] He succeeded in his intention.[2] Thus early had he realized the defects of the unmanageable Dutch machine, and begun to juggle with it, for his own deeper purposes of statecraft. But notice, also, while he was doing this he was strengthening the walls of separation which divided province from province, which nothing would raze save a revolution such as every man of these upper governing strata—Orange and anti-Orange—would recoil from. He had already drunk deep of Holland's cardinal doctrine of provincial sovereignty. In the last cited letter to his English correspondent he says: "The English call the United Netherlands, in various articles" of their commentary, "by the name of a republic; but these provinces are not one republic; each province apart is a sovereign republic, and these United Provinces should not be called a republic, in the singular, but federated or united republics, in the plural number."[3]

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[1] MS. letter of De Witt to an English ambassador, dated May 10, 1652. *Hague Archives*, Lias, 1652.

[2] MS. letter to the Heer Haersolte, dated May 13, 1652. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. letter to an ambassador in England of May 10, 1652. *Hague Archives.* In the *Heylsame Raad in desen tegenwoordige tydt* (*eerste deel*), *Duncan Collection*, 1652, we read: "Do you hold yourselves for a republic? Yes; or rather we are seven republics, bound to each other." This shows that De Witt was not ahead of his generation in the soundness and completeness of his provincially Republican views.

It is unnecessary to indicate here the result of the cogitations of the States-General on the English claims and commentary. Their views were sent by a member of their own body, and so hopeful were they that the negotiation would end satisfactorily that they charged their envoy with private instructions to the ambassadors to sound the English Council of State on the subject of a joint expedition against Portugal, with whom the English now, as well as the Dutch, had a misunderstanding. The ambassadors had another friendly conference with the English committee in reference to the disputed articles on the afternoon of May $\frac{19}{29}$, and they handed in a counter-claim by the Dutch East India Company. They delivered it about five o'clock, at which moment—unknown to all—Tromp and Blake were in deadly battle off the heights of Dover.[1]

[1] MS. *Verbael*, under date May 29.

Chapter III.

THE FIRST BATTLE.

Of the one hundred and fifty ships ordered to be added to the fleet, fifty were to be hired, equipped, and manned by a special agency, named "the directors;" and they were to be ready for service within ten or fourteen days.[1] As many of the Mediterranean traders carried twenty or more guns for their own defence, part of the equipment was thus ready to hand. The smallest of the fifty directors' ships were to be not less than one hundred and twenty feet long by twenty-seven wide; they were to carry not less than twenty-eight guns, firing shot of six or twelve pounds, and the minimum number of men was to be eighty-five sailors and twenty-five soldiers. The remaining hundred ships were ordered to be raised by the Boards of Admiralty, of which there were five. Three of the Boards belonged to Holland, one to Zealand, and one to Friesland. These Boards had not yet succeeded in fitting out the fleet of thirty-six vessels voted in the preceding year—1651. The funds of the Boards were exhausted; their magazines were empty, or indifferently provided with the means of fitting out for war so many ships; vessels of the requisite quality could not be found in sufficient numbers; men were not forth-coming to man them; there was want of zeal in the Boards themselves; and, to increase the difficulty, the Provinces were slow in supplying them with the funds voted for the portion of the fleet they were to equip.[2]

No other result was to be expected from seven sovereign republics trying to equip a fleet through the instrumentality

[1] MS. *Resolutien van H. Hooge Mog.*, March 3, 8, and 16. *Hague Archives.*

[2] De Jonge, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Zeewesen*, tweede deel, eerste stuk, p. 32.

of five independent Boards of Admiralty, especially as the Boards of Admiralty had privileges of their own, were jealous of each other, had antagonisms with even the governing body of the provinces they represented, and were almost small *imperia in imperio*. There was felt in this, as in every department of the administration, the want of a strong executive power, part of whose unquestioned duty it would be to see a thing done, and to compel the doing of it, if necessary. The Princes of Orange, as far as the old sacred privileges permitted, were a kind of executive; but in these stadtholderless days, the States-General, which should have formed the strong executive arm of the confederation, resembled the composite king of Goethe's "Mährchen"—it was neither standing nor sitting, nor reclining, but had sunk together into an unavailing mass. This poor, helpless States-General, it is difficult to point to any more imbecile governing body in history!

The directors, though they were really energetic, also failed to equip their fifty ships in the ten or fourteen days allotted to them; nor was their whole number ready when Admiral Tromp put to sea in May. His fleet consisted of forty-two ships of the line, and several fire-ships and galliots, in all about fifty sail, and his instructions were defective in one critical point.

During all the preceding troublesome months the Dutch commanders had been ordered to act only on their own defence; hence English ships committed their depredations on Dutch commerce unchecked.[1] By the new instruction to Tromp,[2] he was still forbidden to proceed offensively. He was, however, ordered to prevent all visitation of Dutch merchantmen; to defend them against every one; and to set them at liberty, if captured.[3] So far the instructions were specific; and as England claimed the right of visiting and searching ships at pleasure, that clause which ordered Tromp to prevent

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[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, tweede deel, eerste stuk, p. 25.

[2] Dated $\frac{\text{April 30,}}{\text{May 10,}}$ 1652.

[3] Quoted in Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 713, and cited in De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 34.

the visitation of Dutch vessels could only tend to war. But the defect in the instruction lay here. With the rise of the Dutch as a naval power, the immemorial claim of the English sovereigns to the dominion of the adjacent seas was for the first time called in question. Elizabeth, and still more James and Charles—the last-named down to the outbreak of the Parliamentary war—had all asserted this claim by requiring foreign nations to obtain licenses to fish in the so-called British Seas, and by compelling them to strike their flag within sight of their own. Each of these sovereigns had not a little diplomatic trouble with the Dutch on these points. And, in like manner, the young government of the Commonwealth, surrounded with plotters and enemies, and not recognized as yet in Europe, was not disposed to allow England to be shortened of any of her dignities. It enforced the claim over what it regarded as the territorial waters of Britain more rigorously than any English sovereign had ever done. Now, did the Dutch mean to stand upon the new principle of a free and open sea which they were importing into European international law? Tromp's instruction did not tell him how he was to conduct himself in presence of the English flag. The old sea-king himself saw the difficulty, and asked what he was to do in reference to the striking of his colors. He was told that he was to act on his own discretion, and to take care that he did nothing that would bring the State into contempt.[1] Aitzema narrates a conversation between Tromp and apparently the States-General or the States of Holland, according to which he was asked what had been his custom in reference to striking the flag. He replied that he had struck only when the English fleet was the stronger, and he was thereupon told to continue to act in the same manner.[2] And when, after the collision between the fleets, the cause of it came to be inquired into by the Dutch, Tromp declared that he had received no

[1] Brandt, *Leven van de Ruyter*, p. 21, and *Leven van C. Tromp* (the sea-king's son), p. 10; also De Jonge, *Geschiedenis*, vol. ii. part i. p. 35. In Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 731, is also quoted the above order to Tromp; but on p. 730 is given the conversation between Tromp and apparently the government referred to in the text.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 731.

specific command to strike or not to strike his flag, but that he was only instructed, in general terms, so to comport himself in reference thereto that the State should suffer no affront.[1] In thus sending Tromp to sea without any specific direction on a perplexing question of State policy, at a moment when the relations of the two countries were on a most delicate footing, the States-General were much to blame. It was never the fault of this old Dutch oligarchy accidentally to overlook points which affected the honor of the State. Probably the seven sovereigns shrunk from raising the question. In England's humor the alternative was a plain one—they must strike their flag, or fight if they meant to dispute her claim.

This much-talked-of striking of the flag, which made a loud noise and was reckoned of not a little importance in those days, consisted, as Tromp afterward described it, of striking, in presence of an English king's ship of war, carrying an admiral's, vice-admiral's, or rear-admiral's flag, the flag and topsails of the Dutch admiral's ship, and firing nine, seven, or five guns, according to the English admiral's rank; which were replied to by a corresponding number of guns, the Dutch flag remaining struck until the ships or fleets had separated; after which, one or three adieu-shots were fired, and the flag was again raised. In a haven or before a castle a salute was fired, the flag struck, and a pennant was run up in its place; the castle saluting in return, and sometimes granting permission to raise the flag until the fleet should leave, when it was struck again.[2] They had done this to the English King; but the question with them now should have been distinctly answered, Would they continue to do it to the new Republic?

With the defective instruction in his pocket, Tromp, on putting to sea with his fifty ships, went to his cruising station, off the coast of Flanders, between Newport and Dunkirk.

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[1] MS. Rescriptie by den Lieut.-Admirael Tromp aen de Ho. Mo. Heeren Staten General, etc., *Hague Archives*. It will thus be seen that Clarendon (see Book xiii. of his *History*) was misinformed when he says that secret instructions had been given to Tromp not to strike his flag.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 731.

For four days he struggled with a strong wind from the north-east, which threatened to drive him on the sandy Flanders beach, and caused many of his ships to lose their cables and anchors. To repair the damage to his disabled vessels, he crossed the Channel on the evening of Tuesday, May 18, by the English reckoning, and 28th by the Dutch, at about eight o'clock, and, with his fifty ships, sought calmer water within a gunshot of the cliffs of Dover. His instruction had specifically ordered him to avoid the English coast as much as possible, lest any collision might arise; another proof that the Dutch government was sincerely pacific. Nevertheless, here, under the lee of Dover, he actually was. Not far off, in the Downs, rode Major Bourne, at the head of eight Parliamentary ships, the Goodwin Sands lying between him and a somewhat troubled sea. Blake, at the head of a small fleet of fifteen vessels, after cruising for a week about the Channel, was now riding at anchor to the westward, in Rye Bay: Bourne to the east, Blake to the west, Tromp between. Tromp had sent two ships into the Downs to salute Bourne, and to explain that he had merely sought refuge under lee of the English coast to make some damaged vessels ready for sea. Bourne courteously thanked Tromp for the message, according to Tromp's own account.[1] Another version states that Bourne replied that "the reality of what they said would best appear by their speedy drawing off from this coast."[2] All this Tuesday night, and down to two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon (Wednesday, the 19th, by the English reckoning, and 29th by the Dutch), Tromp lay off Dover, without saluting the Castle. Three times were guns fired from the Castle, saying, as it were, "Lo, I am here, and the English flag is here: don't you see us? Have you no act of courtesy on appearing at a

[1] Letter, Tromp to the States-General, of May 30, reporting the collision of the fleets, quoted in the *Hollandsch Mercurius* for May, 1652. Tromp's account of Bourne's answer is confirmed by that signed by forty captains of his fleet, in which they explain the origin of the engagement, and which was addressed to the States-General. Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 711. Tromp in his letter says, "Bourne, with the greatest courtesy, greeted me, and thanked me for the intimation."

[2] *Narrative*, delivered by the Parliament to the ambassadors. (See *Naval Chronicle* for 1814, p. 6.)

neighbor's door?" Tromp did not salute the Castle or lower his flag, but lay a gunshot off, audaciously practising his musketeers, and keeping up a rattle of musketry for several hours. About two o'clock (Wednesday afternoon) he retired toward Calais,[1] sharp eyes watching him from Dover heights. Now, Blake, with his fifteen ships, had already loomed into sight from the west, having received a friendly message from Bourne that the Dutch fleet was off the English coast.[2] He saw the Dutchmen lying at anchor in Dover roads. When he had come within three leagues of them they weighed anchor, and stood away to the eastward, and he supposed that their intention was to avoid the dispute of the flag.[3] Meanwhile a small Dutch craft approached the Dutch fleet off Calais, and held communication with it, whereupon Tromp instantly tacked about and came down straight toward Blake, "Van Tromp the headmost"[4]—fifty ships straight down upon Blake's fifteen. Bourne was already in sight; and coming up after the battle had commenced, he fell upon Tromp's rear.[5]

When the fight was all over, the English people believed that this little craft had brought instructions from the States-General to Tromp to attack the English fleet.[6] The English people were mistaken. Neither the register of the ordinary nor that of the secret resolutions of the States-General contains any such order, and, as we have shown, war with England was absolutely opposed to the views of the men now in

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[1] *Narrative*, furnished by the English Parliament to the Dutch ambassadors. The English accounts make it twelve o'clock. Tromp, in his report of the battle to the States-General, says: "On the 29th, at two o'clock, with the wind in the north-east, and with good weather, we sailed to Calais, with the intention of cruising back to our own coast, to provide ourselves with cables and anchors."

[2] Blake's report of the battle to the Speaker of the House of Commons: "Being in Rye Bay, I received intelligence from Major Bourne that Van Tromp, with forty sail, was off the South Sand Head."

[3] Ibid.

[4] These are Blake's words. Blake at the time of writing this report does not seem to have known of the small Dutch craft having communicated with Tromp; at least, no mention of the fact is made in his report, or in the subsequent narrative by the Parliament.

[5] Tromp's first account of the battle.

[6] Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, iii. 459, ed. 1717, book xiii

power. It was also utterly out of keeping with the straightforwardness and scrupulous integrity which habitually marked the dealings of the Dutch in reference to treaties. The little craft was merely a small Dutch ship of war, which had come from the west in search of Tromp, to inform him that it had been attacked, a week previously, by a Parliamentary ship for not striking its flag; that it had fought desperately; that it and another Dutch ship of war were now in charge of seven merchantmen, with cargoes worth £500,000; that it had left them behind in the Channel, in order to find Tromp; and that they were in danger of being captured, if they had not already been captured, by Blake's fleet, which, when it left, was prowling in the vicinity.[1] Tromp's instruction was definite in such a case—to prevent capture or to release if taken—and he tacked round to seek the ships, or to tear them from the English, if they had fallen a prey;[2] and, lo, here was Blake advancing upon his path. Blake had seen the merchant-ships, and passed them by on the previous Saturday, doing them no harm.[3]

Uncertain whether Blake had seized the ships, suspecting, perhaps, that he had, and in that case foreseeing a battle, Tromp shaped his course with the view of throwing himself between the guns of Dover and Blake's small squadron, and cutting it off from such aid as the Castle might be able to render. Blake threw himself into a posture of readiness, believing Tromp meant to attack him;[4] while Tromp, according to his own account, was merely coming to speak to Blake.[5] So the two heroes met, sea-kings both, and the spark which was to blaze into instant war was struck. Their respective

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[1] Tromp's letter to the States-General, May 30, 1652. *Hollandsch Mercurius.*

[2] Tromp's letter, May 30, ut ant. "Waerop ick my verstont derwaerts begaf, om hun in myn protectie te nemen, en oft sy genomen waren, haer weder te verlossen, soo 't mogelyk was, volgens het 7 en 8 articul myner Instructie van den 16 passato. Onder weg ontmoeten wij 15 schepen en fregatten van 't Parlement."

[3] *Narrative*, of the Parliament.

[4] Blake's letter to the Speaker.

[5] Tromp's letter to the States-General of May 30, reporting the engagement: "Onder weg ontmoeten wij 15 schepen en fregatten van 't Parlement, waer onder een Admirael was, die ick meende te preyen," etc.

accounts of how they began to fight are hopelessly contradictory.

We have several versions from the Dutch side, five of them of special authority, of how the fighting commenced. Three of these are from Tromp himself; the fourth is a declaration on honor, forwarded to the States-General, by forty captains of his fleet; and the fifth is also a declaration on honor, made to the States-General, by fourteen of the officers and men serving on board Tromp's own ship.[1] They all agree in this, that Tromp, while yet beyond gunshot, took in all his sails except his two top-sails, which he lowered half-mast high. But this was not "striking the flag." As to what followed, the Dutch accounts themselves are conflicting, and Tromp's own statements are not in harmony with each other.

First. Writing, on the morning after the battle, to the States-General, he says that Blake fired a single gun twice (meaning "strike"); but according to a declaration by forty officers of Tromp's fleet, on the fourth day after the battle, and a declaration by fourteen officers and men on Tromp's own ship, a fortnight after the battle, Blake fired a single gun three times. Tromp, in a letter of later date than these two declarations, departs from his own first official statement, and speaks of three shots having been fired by Blake.

Second. Tromp, on the day after the battle, reports that he replied with one gun to Blake's second signal-shot; whereas three of the other accounts state that it was the third shot he replied to.

Third. But the most singular discrepancy is that neither in

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[1] Their dates are: 1. First report of the engagement sent by Tromp to the States-General, May 30, the day after the battle (*Hollandsch Mercurius*, May, 1652, p. 35). 2. Declaration by the forty captains, of date June 2 (Aitzema, iii. p. 711). 3. Declaration by the fourteen officers and men, of date June 14 (printed in De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 338). 4. A second letter by Tromp to the ambassadors in England, dated June 16 (also printed in De Jonge, ibid. p. 335). And, 5. Rescriptie by Tromp (MS. *Hague Archives*) aen de Ho. Mo. Heeren Staten Generael, etc., overgegeven op seeckere poincten van consideratie geresulteert uit de Journaelen van de Hooftofficieren van de vloot op den October 24, 1652. This "Rescriptie" is the document we have referred to in the text as Tromp's "Justification."

Tromp's official report of the battle, written on the morning after it, nor in the declaration by the forty captains of his fleet, and not for a whole fortnight after the engagement, are we told (as we are by both Tromp himself and his fourteen officers and men) that, after Blake's second shot, Tromp got a boat ready with the view of sending to Blake to ask the meaning of his firing.

Fourth. Nor do we hear for a fortnight (till Tromp's letter of June 16 to the ambassadors) that he had sent a man aloft to strike the flag;[1] a statement which is almost expressly contradicted in his "Justification" of later date, from which it appears that he did not mean to strike at all.[2]

All the Dutch accounts are unanimous in saying that the first broadside, after the final summons of the English admiral ("strike!"), came from Blake's own vessel; the English accounts are as unanimous in asserting that it came from Tromp's.

Does it matter, after all, who fired the first broadside, even though much stress was laid on it at the time, and though Cromwell was accused in Holland of extorting evidence in support of Blake's statement from the English sailors and from Dutch prisoners?[3] The first shot of the war was Blake's opening signal-gun, calling on Tromp to strike his flag. From

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[1] Tromp to the ambassadors, on June 16, in De Jonge's *Zeewezen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 336: "Onder wegen gevonden de 15 bewuste Parlements schepen en fregatten en noch verre buyten schoots synde, alle myne zeylen ingenomen, uytgesondert beyde myne mars zeylen, en die gestreecken, tot respect van den Admirael, ende een man aen myn vlagge gesonden, die den heer Admirael Blake selve heeft connen sien opclimmen, om te strycken, die alreede de wimpel (die onder de vlagge eerst waeyde) had ingenomen," etc.

[2] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 41, where the passage from Tromp's Justification is quoted: "Tot wechneminge van alle presumptie van offentien (behalve om syn uiterste schepen in te wachten) innemende all syne seylen, uytgesondert de twee marsseylen die hy ter halver stengh dede strycken; verder in hebbende gehaelt syn wimpel ende een man gestelt aen de vlagge, met welcke civile bejegeningh of wel de voorn. Blaeck behoorde gecontenteert te syn geweest, gelyck hy twee jaeren te voren schepen van dezen Staat gerencontreert hebbende, selve den aenderen met eerschoten hadden begroet, sonder aen d'een ofte d'andere syde vlaggen te strycken."

[3] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, June, 1652, p. 39.

that he could not recede; and if the last signal-gun remained unheeded, a broadside and a battle were to follow as a matter of course.

The remote origin of the war must be laid at the door of those English sovereigns who first made the arrogant claim that foreign ships should strike in presence of the English flag. It was a demand that, in the nature of things, would be disputed as soon as any nation was strong enough at sea to throw off the galling and humiliating necessity. But the young English Republic, having inherited the position from the English sovereigns, could not lay the claim aside. It had to bear itself as bravely before Europe as the English sovereigns had ever done. The Stuart party would have destroyed the reputation of the Commonwealth if the Parliament had foregone one tittle of the honor or reputation which the country possessed under the sceptre of its kings; and the humor of the men now governing it was to forego none of that reputation, but to add to it, if possible, and to extend and steady English influence throughout the world.

So, then, the two heroes met. And the May evening closed over them, Blake keeping his position all night on the place where he had fought, and Tromp drifting away toward the French coast with his lights at his mast-heads. Let it not be imagined that Tromp was beaten off the field. He had been surprised into a battle on a point on which he had no commission to fight; he says he fought defensively, and some add that, if he had acted on the offensive, he, with his fifty ships, might have destroyed the small combined squadrons of Blake and Bourne. This is conjecture, as the English ships, though inferior in numbers, were much larger than the Dutch. For more than half an hour, he alleges,[1] he refrained from hoisting his red flag, the signal for his ships to engage; and three times, he says, in the course of the battle he stopped firing, "hoping that Blake would take himself away."[2] But that

[1] Tromp's letter to the Dutch ambassadors in England, above cited, and declaration by the fourteen officers of his own ship, also cited above.

[2] Ibid. Neither of these statements is forth-coming in Tromp's first report of the engagement to the States-General, which, to say the least of it, is singular, es-

was not Blake's method of fighting. Tromp would have us infer, and we think his statement is true, that his withdrawal was an act of moderation; he had preserved his flag from "contempt." His verbal commission was fulfilled. What need more was there for fighting?

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pecially as Tromp thought it of such importance that he sent a copy of it to the ambassadors in England on the same day that he forwarded it to the States-General.

Chapter IV.

PAUW'S EMBASSY TO PREVENT WAR.

Next day the news of the battle spread all over London. Cromwell himself went to Dover to examine the officers and men, and the Dutch prisoners taken during the engagement, as to its origin. An angry mob congregated threateningly around the house of the ambassadors in Chelsea. The Council of State instantly stationed a troop of horse before their dwelling.[1] The Dutch thought it was to keep them from conspiring with the Stuart malignants, but the resolution of the Council of State alleged that it was to protect them from harm, as the freest egress and ingress was permitted to them and their friends.[2] It was at this moment that some vulgar English humor broke out; the joke was current everywhere: "Have the Dutch nothing better to send us than some animals as ambassadors—a cat and a sheep?" and when Adrian Pauw came over as extraordinary ambassador, to plead for peace, the rough humorists of the day discovered that his name meant a "peacock;" and there was more rude mirth: instead of ambassadors, the Dutch had sent them a menagerie!

[1] MS. *Verbael* of Cats, etc.'s, embassy, under date May 29: "Het is aenmerkens werdigh dat geduyrende des onse aldaer laetste conferentie ter selver uyre de ongeluckige rencontre tusschen de twee Vlooten in zee voorgevallen is waervan de geruchten 's anderen daeghs naer middagh (synde den 30 May) door de geheele stadt van London ende omliggende plaetsen uytgespreyt syn, welcke by die van de regeeringe aldaer terstondt soo hoogh opgenoomen syn geworden, dat den Raed van State op den selven avondt ons logement met eenige compagnien ruyteren rontom heeft doen besetten, ende daertoe ons door den Commissaris Generael Whaley toegeschickt seeckere resolutie onder hier achten aengehecht." The resolution, which was signed by Thurloe, as clerk of the Council, ordered "a number of horse to guard the ambassadors."

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 710, although Wicquefort, *Histoire*, ii. p. 130, states the contrary.

Old Father Cats and his fellow-ambassadors, when the letter which Tromp wrote them, with his account of the origin of the fight, reached their hands, came down from Chelsea, and delivered some well-intentioned platitudes to the Council of State, about old friendship, followers of the same religion, lovers of the same freedom, neighbors by sea, and so on.[1] They prayed that no steps should be taken until the States-General had inquired into the affair, and that meanwhile the negotiation for the treaty should proceed. Three other times[2] had he to entreat to the same effect before the Parliament condescended to answer him, and they did not answer him till a fortnight had elapsed.[3] The old man's platitudes availed nothing: the Parliament had mistakenly convinced itself that Tromp had, with deliberate intention, and by express orders of the States-General, attacked Blake, and that his attack was the opening act of a great plan by the Dutch government for the overthrow of the English Republic. Such was their reading of the resolution to add 150 ships of war to the Dutch fleet. Here stand the Parliament's own words: "We see too much reason to believe that the States-General of the United Provinces intended to usurp England's acknowledged right over the sea, to destroy her fleet, which, next to God, formed her walls and bulwarks, and thereby to expose the Commonwealth to invasion at their pleasure." The English government demanded reparation for the past and security for the future.

It had taken five days to convey the news of the battle to the Hague. It produced consternation among the anti-Orange party in the Provinces, and exultant joy among the upholders of the house and the Stuart exiles. The former, regarding Tromp as a *protégé* of the House of Orange, accused him of intentionally overstepping his instructions and of intentionally bringing about a collision with England. The Orange faction believed that the war would compel the Seven Provinces to declare the Prince of Orange captain and admiral-general, and

[1] MS. *Verbael* of Cats, etc.'s, embassy, under date June 3 (Dutch reckoning).

[2] Ibid., under date June 6, 11, and 13.

[3] Ibid. The answer of the Parliament was dated June 17 (Dutch reckoning).

to espouse the Stuart cause. In this they misread the temper of the dominant section of the oligarchy, among whom there was one young spirit rising into influence, a man of indomitable and inflexible character, of clear views, of remorseless logical consistency in his political opinions, and of unconquerable patience, who would hold the party steady to its purpose if all other men failed. But the party needed no such steadying at the present stage of the crisis. A Stuart alliance, they knew, would be the seal of their own doom.

The first act of the States-General was to instruct the five Boards of Admiralty to complete the equipment of the 150 ships, and to send them instantly under Tromp's flag. But there they paused. The dominant party, even at this moment, proceeded with moderation and self-control, in the hope that peace might still be preserved. De Witt himself did not realize the seriousness of the situation. On June 7 he wrote from Dordrecht to one of the ambassadors, trusting "that what had happened might not be the cause of further delay, but that the treaty might be completed, and the sooner the better for both countries."[1] He came up to the Hague the same afternoon, and got his ideas cleared up a little; for on the following day some misgivings had arisen within him: "Out of the accompanying copies your nobleness will be pleased to learn what it is to be wished had been prevented by the prudence of the one admiral or the other (God knows who is to blame!), as further estrangement between the two nations is not without reason to be feared."[2] De Witt was right. The wound, for a time, was incurable.

Thus the calamity which had been slowly accumulating for ten years, and which the party now in power had been toilsomely laboring for these ten years to avert, was at hand. They knew that the first disaster to the fleet would be seized by their political opponents to overturn them. Under any circumstances, a naval war would suspend the trade of the Provinces, and multiply foes within while they were contend-

[1] MS. letter of June 7, dated from Dordrecht. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. triplicate letter from De Witt to Haersolte, Singendock, and De Huybert, of June 8. *Hague Archives.*

ing with the enemy abroad. The Holland oligarchy, therefore, which had everything to risk and nothing to gain by a war with England, was too wise to play blindly into the hands of the Orange adherents by hotly and passionately entering upon it, and it carried two important measures in the States-General to testify to England its sincere and anxious desire for peace.

The first was to issue a new instruction to Tromp, not to attack the English fleet, but only to defend himself if attacked, and to strike the flag according to the rules in use when Britain was under the government of its kings.[1] The next was to send an extraordinary ambassador to England, to remove the impression from the mind of the Parliament that Tromp had acted under the instructions of his government. Accordingly, Adrian Pauw, Grand Pensionary of Holland, and at this time the most influential man in the seven sovereign republics, one present at the most secret deliberations of the States-General, a functionary from whom no act or design of the Dutch government could be hid, was sent over in great haste—in such great haste that he left without credentials[2]—to assure the Parliament of the absolutely pacific intentions of his government.[3] He suggested that the collision of the fleets should be regarded as an unfortunate accident, proposed a joint investigation into the origin of the engagement, with the punishment of whichever admiral had begun it, and joined therewith the proposal that the fleets should suspend hostilities.[4] He stated that the States-General had already given orders that hence-

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 45.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 718.

[3] *Resolutions of the States-General*, June 13; Wicquefort, *Histoire*, ii. p. 132.

[4] MS. Summaire de ce que le seigneur Adrian Pauw, ambassador, etc., a proposé aux deputés du tres illustre Conseil d'Estat, June $\frac{1}{2}\frac{4}{4}$, to be found in MS. bundle of papers relating to Pauw's embassy, C. No. 3, and also G. No. 7. *Hague Archives.* On June $\frac{1}{2}\frac{4}{1}$, Pauw made his first general proposal to the Parliament; who, on the same date, referred it to the Council of State, to hear what further he had to say. On June $\frac{1}{2}\frac{5}{2}$, he made his further proposals before the Council of State, who, on the $\frac{1}{3}\frac{4}{4}$th, appointed a committee, consisting of Whitelocke, the Lord Commissioner Lisle, the Lord Viscount Lisle, St. John, Mr. Bond, Mr. Scott, or any three of them, to receive any overtures Pauw might make in writing, and to treat with him thereupon, and report to the Council of State.

forth the Dutch should strike in presence of the English flag,[1] and he invited the commissioners to resume Cats's interrupted negotiation. With some difficulty he drew from the English government a vague statement of its own terms.[2] These were:

First, payment of the cost and injury which England had sustained in consequence both of the extraordinary naval armament of the States-General and of Tromp's attack; second, on payment thereof, or satisfactory caution therefor, all ships taken since the encounter were to be set free; and, third, security that the two States should form an alliance and identify their interests. Pauw, with a preliminary suggestion that the injuries on both sides should be taken into account, asked the committee of the Council of State to give him a "modest estimate" of the costs and injuries demanded. He even offered to negotiate for a closer union, if the English government still wanted a union closer than that contemplated by the thirty-six articles of the Dutch. "First say," replied the committee of the Council, "that you are willing to pay the costs; when you do, the Council of State will fix a reasonable and moderate sum, and all hostilities will cease."[3]

The war-floods in the interim had been rising at home around the Dutch government; angry floods that would no longer be dammed back. That very moderation and passivity, since the English letters of marque had been granted, eight months ago, which the Holland faction had presented to the English government as a proof of good faith and a desire for peace, had drawn round it the indignation and scorn of the adherents of the Orange house, who made use of it as a political lever to excite all classes of the people.[4] Hollanders and Zealanders had suffered severely from the English depreda-

[1] MS. Summaire, etc., C. No. 3, June $\frac{1}{4}\frac{4}{4}$. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. bundle of papers relating to Pauw's embassy (*Hague Archives*); also Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 718. A number of the papers relating to Pauw's embassy, and a few referring to St. John's, will be found in the first volume of Thurloe's *State-papers.*

[3] MS. bundle of papers relating to Pauw's embassy, $\frac{\text{June } 26,}{\text{July } 6,}$ etc. (*Hague Archives*); Aitzema, *Saken*, p. 719.

[4] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 712.

tions, and this new stadtholderless government lay listlessly doing nothing. Their sea-king, Tromp: why not let him, invincible yet, loose upon these English? "What! have we no government, then? Give us our captain-general, as of old." And this desire was broadening and deepening in the hearts of the people, assuming daily more ominous dimensions, and threatening at last to rise against the government in surging resistlessness and sweep it away. Blake had been ordered to attack the herring fleet and the East India merchantmen, and the dominant oligarchy must now instantly fight England, if it is to exist. The question, if no swift, speedy peace with England could be made, was ripening rapidly into the issue of war, or into a revolution that would carry the baby Prince to the head of the State, and bury them in the grave of their own imbecility and irresolution.

Under this resistless pressure from within and without, they ordered the immediate return of the ambassadors, unless all acts of hostility were positively stopped, and all prisoners and captured ships released. First one resolution to that effect, then a second in still more imperative terms,[1] reached Pauw in those very moments when he was assured that the Council of State would fix a moderate and reasonable sum if he would first declare that the States-General were willing to pay it. In the face of these resolutions he could not so bind them. He had officially learned, also, that the English fleet had put to sea.[2] Further hope there was none, so he went to take his farewell audience, and return home. The States-General had already sent a new instruction to Tromp, and to the commander of the Mediterranean squadron, to attack the English fleet and destroy the English commerce.[3] Letters of marque were also granted to all who wished them.

The embassy headed by Cats and that of Pauw spent, between them, five weeks in England, after the collision of the

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[1] MS. Pauw's embassy.

[2] MS. bundle of papers relating to his embassy, $\frac{\text{June } 26.}{\text{July } 6.}$ This document is not in Aitzema. It was an intimation, handed to Pauw by the Council of State, that the English fleet had put to sea to "execute its designs."

[3] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 46. Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 719.

fleets, in trying to avert the war.[1] There is something unspeakably sad, almost tragically sublime, in the spectacle of these four ambassadors, two of them white with many years, standing before the English Parliament entreating for peace. Friendship, however, between the two nations had long since become impossible, till the atmosphere was cleared by war. The Dutch, in their efforts to maintain peace, went as far as any nation could honorably go. The Parliament was arrogant, and made demands which no government could in honor grant.

During the weeks that Grand Pensionary Pauw was absent from Holland, John de Witt discharged the duties of his office at home. The privilege came to him not by election, or the recognition of any merit in him. It was the privilege of Dordrecht, as the prerogative town—the town which had the right of delivering its vote first among all the Holland towns in the States of Holland—that its Pensionary should, in the absence of the Grand Pensionary, discharge the duties of the latter. Although this temporary direction of affairs came to De Witt by mere official privilege, the fact must be noted, especially as the chief business into which he threw himself was the finding of money to complete the equipment of the 150 ships.[2] His policy at this juncture was earnest negotiation for peace, and earnest and rapid preparation for war, if war must come.

Tromp, with instructions to attack the English fleet and fight to the bitter end,[3] was at sea when the ambassadors returned, heavy at heart, and looking into a black, unknown future for their native land. We have a hint of their gloomy feelings,

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[1] Viz., Cats's embassy, from the encounter to June $\frac{10}{20}$ (when its functions were suspended by the arrival of Pauw); and Pauw for three weeks, from June $\frac{10}{20}$ to July 1, by the English reckoning, and July 11 by the Dutch. The two sets of ambassadors returned home together.

[2] MS. letter, De Witt to Pauw, June $\frac{9}{19}$. The translation of De Witt's words is: "Since the departure of your nobleness, the business of the States of Holland has been carried on without interruption regarding the expeditions, finding of means wherewith the Admiralty may complete the equipment of the ships which are yet defective. Nothing definite up to the present moment has been concluded."

[3] His instructions are dated July 3 (Dutch reckoning), Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 721.

and of the comparative commercial standing of the two countries, in a saying of one of them in England, preserved by Aitzema, that England was proceeding against a gold mountain, and the Dutch against an iron one only.[1] Pauw had clung tenaciously to the hope of an arrangement, and at parting asked the Council of State to permit him, after his return to Holland, to send his secretary, or some other trusty person, to keep up a negotiation for peace. Or, would the English Parliament, he entreated, name some one of their own choosing in London to carry on that negotiation? Refused on both points, the aged diplomatist turned privily to Aitzema, the historian, who was Resident for the Hanse Towns in the Hague, and was then on an embassy to England on behalf of the Towns—turned to him, nay, also wrote him, even at the last moment before embarking at Gravesend, an anxious letter, asking him to influence his English friends in favor of peace, and to correspond with him (Pauw), and let him know if anything could be done to resume the interrupted negotiation. Aitzema did take up the hopeless task, and brought it to this, that if the Dutch sent ambassadors to London, the negotiation would be resumed, but the war would not be suspended. The public opinion in Holland could not now be controlled, but the Holland party caused him to be informed that, if a neutral place could be named for the negotiation, they would try to lead the Provinces to the despatch of an embassy. The English government answered that the negotiation must be carried on at London, and Aitzema's pacific labors proved a failure.[2]

Tromp met the ambassadors on their return, went on board the vessel which conveyed Pauw, got from him a list of the English fleet, and some encouragement to a swift execution of his now bloody instructions. At parting Pauw fell upon the sea-king's neck, perhaps with tears (our historian, Aitzema, to whom Pauw himself told the circumstance, does not say), and embracing him, sent him on his stern and deadly way, invoking on him, somewhat stagily, "God's blessing, Samson's

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 721.

[2] Ibid. iii. pp. 721, 731.

strength, David's courage, and Solomon's wisdom."[1] The common people in the Hague were to malign him greatly on his return; for they took it into their obstinate and foolish heads that he had exhorted Tromp to avoid fighting; and as the notion grew in the same suspicious heads, the States of Holland, by a proclamation, had to deny it, and place him under their special protection.[2]

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. pp. 721, 731.

[2] Ibid.

Chapter V.

OPERATIONS OF THE FLEETS.

Tromp, when he received the blessing of Pauw of Heemsteede, early in July, was at the head of ninety-six ships of war and some fire-ships, carrying 11,000 men.[1] Many of these were small vessels, being merchantmen hired for the war, and armed with six or eight guns only, for the Dutch admiralties had been obliged to take such vessels as they could obtain. Even the ships of the regular fleet were smaller, and more lightly armed, than the English ships; but Tromp, strong in his own genius and the courage and skill of his seamen—the best sailors of his time—held on his way, nothing doubting. He was no longer to try his fortune against decrepit Spain, but against a powerful nation, whose counsels may be said to have been led, though Oliver was not yet Protector, by the greatest man of the age, and against a naval genius equal to his own.

At the moment of his rencounter with Pauw, Tromp was on his way to the Downs in search of Blake. Pauw informed him that Blake had sailed for the North, but that Vice-Admiral Ayscue was lying in the Downs, with a small squadron, too weak to resist the mighty fleet which Tromp led. Tromp's instruction was to seek out Blake and give him battle,[2] but a general clause left him to his own discretion. He resolved to proceed to the Downs and destroy Ayscue.

Once already, in 1639, in these very waters he had annihilated an enemy's fleet, dealing the blow that put the finishing

[1] Brief van Tromp aan H. Hoog. Mog. July 22, 1652. See also De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 47. Of these ninety-six ships, forty-six had been fitted out and supplied by the "Directors."

[2] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 41.

stroke to the maritime power of Spain. Here again was another enemy's fleet, apparently within his grasp. He would begin the war by destroying that too!

Tromp divided his fleet into three squadrons, and blocked up the outlets by which Ayscue might issue from the Downs. He meant to enter and grapple with him, whenever wind and weather permitted, and he secured the outlets to prevent the escape of his prey. First, however, there was no wind to carry Tromp's ships within the Downs, and when the wind sprung up, it was unfavorable. He spent some days tacking and manœuvring to enter the roadstead. Meantime, on shore, the Kentish militia had been called out, in case Tromp should attempt a landing, and long platforms had been run up between Deal and Sandown, mounted with cannon to repel the invasion;[1] but, frustrated by contrary winds, he impatiently resigned his prey, and reuniting his squadrons, turned them toward the North, in pursuit of Blake, as his instructions commanded.

On the same day (July 22)[2] that Tromp was thus loosening his hold of Ayscue, Blake had reached the coast of Scotland,[3] and plunged into the heart of the Dutch fishing fleet. Around him lay, scattered over the swelling sea, nearly six hundred fishing-smacks, each carrying about fourteen persons, in all about 8000.[4] In many of them were the wives and children

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[1] Whitelocke, p. 538.

[2] *Journal gehouden op het scheep Hollandia—Duncaniana Pamphlets*, 1652.

[3] Aitzema first puts Blake's fleet at forty ships, with ten fire-ships (*Saken*, iii. p. 721); then, a few days afterward, it appears to have been strengthened to seventy (ibid. p. 721); Wicquefort puts it at forty-one ships, with ten fire-ships (*Histoire*, ii. p. 147). De Jonge does not specify the number (*Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 48); in the *Onstelde Zee* it is put at sixty-six or sixty-eight ships strong. Whitelocke describes it as a fleet of sixty sail—p. 538.

[4] Luzac, *La Richesse de la Hollande*, pp. 192–'6. Luzac says that from the middle of the twelfth century, when the Zealanders began to pay a great deal of attention to trade, to the establishment of the East India Company—four centuries—herring was the principal article of commerce. Salting was invented in the middle of the thirteenth century, and Zealand had a large fishing trade until after the French wars. Having given itself to privateering, as the more profitable, the trade passed almost entirely into Holland. No herring-fishing was allowed before June 24. In some edicts it was called the Peru, or gold mine, of the State. It

of the fishermen, for the women often accompanied their husbands on their fishing expeditions. Sinking, after a fierce engagement (in which many of the fishing-boats were destroyed), three of the protecting ships of war, and capturing the remaining eight or nine, he ordered the Dutch fishermen to return home.[1] He then held on his way toward the Orkneys, with the view of intercepting the richly-laden Dutch fleet of Indiamen, which was expected to be returning by the north-east coast of Scotland, to escape the danger of capture, under the letters of marque, in the Channel. This was the reason why Blake was flying with all sail to the North, and why Tromp could not waste time over Ayscue in the Downs. Tromp was now upon his enemy's track, and was pursuing him, several days' sail behind, into these northern Scottish seas. The race lasted through all the final week of July and the first few days of August, with still weather and sometimes no wind.[2] Blake was ignorant that his enemy was in his rear; and Tromp, knowing only that the English fleet was ahead of him, was groping his way vaguely toward it.[3] On August 4 he reached Fairisle, a solitary islet half-way between the Orkneys and Shetland. A stiff breeze arrested his progress northward. On the 5th he tacked about with his whole fleet, returned, as it were, upon his course, for there was no headway against the wind. But, lo! at last, on the afternoon of the same day, the English fleet came in sight. With fourteen days of patient sailing, Tromp had tracked out his foe.

But there was to be no battle in these remote and isle-clad

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was also called "the great fishery." In 1601 there issued 1500 busses from the Republic for the herring-fishery. Some years later, there issued from it, Raleigh says, 3000 for the same object; but Luzac thinks his calculation is erroneous.

[1] Of the eleven or twelve Dutch ships protecting the fishing fleet, one carried thirty guns, two carried twenty-eight, and the rest carried twenty-four or twenty-two guns. See the pamphlet, *Onstelde Zee*, which gives the number of the Dutch convoy-ships at eleven; but the Dutch authorities vary, as Aitzema speaks of them as thirteen in number (*Saken*, iii. p. 721); the *Hollandsch Mercurius* (July, 1652) speaks of them as twelve; De Jonge, eleven (*Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 48); Wicquefort does not give the number.

[2] *Journal gehouden op het schcep Hollandia, synde een van de verstrooyde schepen* (kept by some one unknown). [3] Ibid.

seas. The stiff north-west gale rose during the night of the 5th[1] into a hurricane, and the two mighty fleets were smitten by sea and wind. Blake took refuge among the islands, and escaped injury. Tromp's ships, which were exposed to its full fury, were shattered by the terrific storm, and when the morning broke, more than fifty of them had disappeared. A few were in ruins, on the rocks or breakers of the Shetlands, and others had taken refuge under the lee of the islands, or been driven far to sea before the tempest, and their fate was unknown. Some fell into the hands of Blake. Gathering the remainder together, the old hero returned dejected to the Netherlands. Out of the ninety-six ships with which he had sailed a month before on his hopeful voyage, he took back about forty, and most of these were in a disabled condition. Among those which were missing were the best and largest of the fleet.[2]

Amazement and consternation seized both government and people at the sight of the majestic ruin which Tromp brought back to his fatherland. The fifty lost ships must have carried five or six thousand men; and a shriek of agony and wrath went up from thousands of homes. It was not yet known that many of the ships had been scattered among the Shetland Isles, and been driven before the storm to Norway, and would again return. The people only realized the fact of the ruin of one of the mightiest fleets the Republic had ever launched, and that in every sea-town of the Republic innumerable families were stricken into fury over the loss, supposed or actual, of a father, a husband, a brother, or a son. The bolt of the national wrath fell first upon Pauw and Tromp, and next upon the anti-stadtholder government.

Neither the States-General nor the States of Holland appear to have intended, on Tromp's return, to visit him with

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[1] *Journal gehouden op het scheep Hollandia.*

[2] The *Hollandia's Journal* does not give any general result. But see *Hollandsch Mercurius* for 1652, pp. 78, '9. See also Wagenaar, *Vad. Hist.* xii. 220. De Jonge (*Zeewesen*, eerste stuk, p. 49) says: "Tromp met minder dan de helft syner schepen, waarvan de meeste nog zeer ontredderd waren, zich gedwongen zag, eerlang naar het Vaderland terug te keeren." Wicquefort, ii. 148.

censure or disgrace. They proceeded to deliberate with him over new equipments, and he was even formally thanked by the States of Holland. Hitherto, since the collision of the fleets, he had been suspected and roundly abused by the non-official section opposed to the House of Orange; but now the Orange party, thinking their hopes blasted by this resistless storm, also turned upon him, accused him of treachery, and poisoned the public mind with the notion that he might have crushed Ayscue in the Downs; that he might have prevented the dispersion of the herring fleet, and avoided the storm. It was now that public rumor asserted that Pauw had told Tromp, in that interview which the ambassador had with him on the high-seas, not to fight; and that, but for this order, the invincible old sailor would have made a prize of Ayscue and his fleet in the Downs. Anonymous pamphleteers set the actions both of Pauw and Tromp in the most odious and false light. The States of Holland, besides denying the accusations against its Grand Pensionary Pauw, stood also forth as the friend of Tromp. But in the States-General the distrust found a voice; and for two months, while an official investigation was proceeding, Tromp, deprived of his command, lived on shore, in disfavor, if not in disgrace.

The Dutch government had not been staking their all on the fleet which Tromp had commanded, and while he was still at sea a second was being equipped. The command of it was given to Michael de Ruyter. De Ruyter's first duty was to convoy through the Channel a fleet of merchantmen, bound for Spain and the Mediterranean, and to take under his protection such homeward-bound ships as he met. Ayscue's small squadron, after Tromp's departure in search of Blake, had been increased, and he had been despatched to scour the Channel westward. Between Calais and Dover he met a fleet of thirty Dutch merchantmen, most of which he captured or sunk; the rest he ran aground on the French coast, and then proceeded westward.[1] De Ruyter, several days' sail in his rear, crossed the Channel at the head of his merchant fleet,

[1] Clarendon, *History*, book xiii. p. 461.

and hugged the English shore, within sight of the green downs and yellowing cornfields of Sussex. The peasants and villagers watched his small armada as it passed, and they fled in terror when he lowered some boats and sent a body of armed seamen on shore to procure a few things he required for his fleet.[1] At Plymouth he and Ayscue met, on the 26th of August—Ayscue with forty ships and five fire-ships; and De Ruyter covering, with thirty ships and six fire-ships, a fleet of sixty merchantmen.[2] At the first signal of battle the merchantmen fled in safety on their respective courses,[3] for De Ruyter lay between them and Ayscue.

We pass over the fighting. Twenty-eight of De Ruyter's thirty ships were small, carrying less than thirty guns, and only the remaining two carried forty.[4] On the other hand, twelve of Ayscue's were large vessels, two of which were mounted with sixty pieces. The victory was with the Dutch.

All night De Ruyter remained, with his lights up, in the neighborhood of the spot where he had fought, prepared to renew the battle next day. When morning dawned Ayscue was far distant, and was steering for Plymouth Sound. De Ruyter convened a council of war, and deliberated whether they should not pursue him into the Sound, and put the finishing stroke upon him there. It was so resolved; but an unfavorable wind compelled De Ruyter to remain content with the victory he had won.[5] He was at the moment supreme master of the sea. Blake was in the Thames, re-equipping his fleet; and Ayscue had to repair his damaged timbers in Plymouth. For some time De Ruyter kept the southern coast of England in terror, riding to and fro in triumph in the Channel, without a ship to oppose him.

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[1] See the pamphlet *Onstelde Zee.*

[2] There is the greatest discrepancy in the different accounts of the strength of the respective fleets.

[3] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 52. [4] Ibid. p. 141. [5] Ibid. p. 54.

Chapter VI.

DE WITT AND AN ORANGE PLOT.

The two predominating facts in the political condition of the Union at this moment are, on the one side, the fiery love of the people for the House of Orange; and, on the other, the arrival among the opponents of that house of a man of iron will and great subtle faculty, whose influence is already making itself felt upon the events of the time, and without whom his party would not have retained its supremacy in the government even to the end of the first English war. For nineteen years from this date these two conflicting elements—the worship by the people of the House of Orange, and the opposing genius of John de Witt—will remain the prime political factors of the period.

This adoration of the House of Orange, let us understand it well, is a national feeling—an unsubduable, fiery instinct; it was this that had made the people a nation, that kept them one in heart. In this hero-worship was the true union that held, and was to hold, the Provinces together. Not the parchments of the previous century, but the people's living faith in this beloved house, whose princes had led them forth from Philip's bondage to freedom and an honorable place among the nations of the earth. Figure, then, in every town throughout the Union, the great body of the people, loyal, to the very core, to the recognized head of the Orange family; in fact, loving that family with unbounded devotion, and ready to make any sacrifice for it; figure the volcanic heart of the community, riotously, irrepressibly boiling over at times in ominous demonstrations of its devotion to the house, and in ominous demonstrations of hatred against all who set themselves against it; figure the whole complex webs of intrigue

which the Orange section of the oligarchy was incessantly weaving—and you have, in that boundless love, in that self-sacrifice, in the resistless volcanic eruptions of the humbler class of the people, and in those endless subterranean intrigues of Orange statesmen, the troubles and difficulties of that party which De Witt is soon to marshal into compactness and to lead.

Had it remained with the community to settle the question, the hour which saw William III. brought into the world, a week after his father's death, would have seen him raised, amidst the triumphant shouts of the people, to the supreme office of the State. The people loved to speak of the child as the "little sprout of the Orange tree." The clergy, even in the Hague, the seat of the government, lauded the deeds of the Orange princes from their pulpits; some of them refused to pray for the established government, and prayed, instead, by name, for the young Prince and his house; the more unruly getting into trouble with the States of Holland in consequence. Children, in mimic military show, paraded on festival days before the family residence, with symbols of affection. Sometimes, on such occasions, the little Prince was held up to view by his nurse, and hailed by the ringing, gleesome shouts of his juvenile worshippers, the future men who were to be led forth by him, in the coming years, to battle. Once the States of Holland had ordered one of these children's processions to be dispersed; but it brought a riotous populace on foot, and led to a tumult in the Hague.

Thus a stadtholderless government, whatever account it has to give of itself otherwise, must maintain itself in violation of the strong, unquenchable instinct of the Dutch people. That it is to maintain itself for nineteen years is to be due to John de Witt.

We begin at this time, in 1652, to come upon direct and unmistakable traces of De Witt's influence in the Republic. In 1651, the first year of his public life, we cannot discover more than one or two indubitable footsteps of his. Where, in 1652, we hit upon the few remaining indications of his track we see this — the thorough completeness with which he has

imbibed the creed of his party, and the logical rigor with which he is carrying it out. The man seems to have leaped into the heart of it, and to have become king and master of it, at a single bound. In the beginning of 1652, as we have already said, we find him, at the head of the Holland committee on English affairs, inspiring Father Cats's embassy to the Parliament. None but a trusted champion of the stadtholderless, or pure republican, doctrines would have been invested with this responsible function; so that in the first year of his political life he has secured the confidence of his party in the thorough-goingness of his principles. Next, in the same year, he appears as the author of a resolution which ordered the arms of the House of Orange to be removed from the colors of the train-bands in the Hague, and the arms of Holland to be substituted. Upon the true theory of the constitution, it was plain that the Orange arms had no right to be there; and De Witt's resolution was a strict logical consequence, not only of Holland's view, but of a just view, of the parchments. That the parchments, thus interpreted, had ceased to represent any longer the national or popular view, became immediately apparent. The train-bands, on the day (May 6) when the new colors were first displayed, mustered on the parade-ground with their pockets filled with beans and pease, and, on the new flags being unfurled, riddled them with that ammunition, having powder but no lead, and ripped them up with their pikes.[1] History does not record what the mutinous exclamations of the moment may have been; but does not such a rebellious reception of a logically conceived State-flag amount to this: "Away with the dead letter of your parchment constitution; the sovereign ruler in our hearts is the Prince of Orange?" The same night, in the Hague, the constitutional oligarchy was suddenly roused out of its peaceful and luxurious slumbers. Excited members of the burgher watch, all night long, demonstrated riotously in the streets where the oligarchy lived, and kept up a constant shouting, to the terror of that section of it which was opposed to the princely house.

[1] Sypesteyn's *Geschiedkundige Bijdragen*, i. p. 34; also Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 752.

Again, when Tromp came into accidental collision with Blake, the grand old admiral, in the simplicity of his heart, and the officers who corroborated his official report of the circumstance, called the flag by the name of the "Prince's flag"—a name he had been accustomed to call it through all the long series of brilliant naval operations against Spain. On the representation of De Witt, the States of Holland declared this to be an abuse which required rectification; and De Witt, as interim Grand Pensionary of Holland (Grand Pensionary Pauw being in England, on his peace embassy, at the time), proposed in the States-General that the several admiralties be ordered to instruct their naval officers no longer to name the flag the "Prince's," but the "State's flag." It happened that the province presiding for the week was Friesland, where, Prince William being stadtholder, the doctrines of Holland met with no sympathy; and the Frisian chairman refused to put De Witt's proposal to the vote of the Assembly.[1] What concerns us here is, less the result than the fact, that De Witt, at the extreme outset of his career, is found endeavoring to purge the State of its connection with the House of Orange, even in points of the smallest detail.

We next find him, in September of the same year, a member of a deputation from the States of Holland to those of Zealand,[2] where the smouldering and suppressed fire had at last burst out into a proposal to proclaim the young Prince captain and admiral general of the Union, and Prince William of Friesland his lieutenant till his majority. It deserves to be kept in view that this proposal, though introduced into the

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[1] Sypesteyn's *Gesch. Bij.* i. p. 34.

[2] Pamphlet, *De Rechte Ontdeckinge van de Hollandsche Regeerende Loevesteynsche Heeren*, 1652 (*Duncaniana Collection*). This pamphlet was printed at Dordrecht, and in it I find the first mention, in the pamphlet literature of the time, of John de Witt. It says that Pauw was the author of the resolution to send a deputation to Zealand. "De Pensionaris de Witt seer secondeerde de propositie van Pauw om de resolutie van Dort goet te maeken welck hy met de zyne daer uytgewrocht heeft van noyt yemandt uyt het Huys van Orangien of Nassau tot stadthouder of Capiteyn Generael of Lieutenant te kiesen, daeran sy de Princens wapen daer hebben doen afbreken." Further on it describes him as "this false betrayer De Witt, who misleads the other heeren." It is, of course, an Orange pamphlet.

States of Zealand, and reaching the stage of a formal resolution after Tromp's return from the Shetlands with the remains of his great fleet, was nevertheless in train before the fleet of the Republic had suffered any disaster. That calamity helped the passage of the resolution in Zealand, but was in nowise its cause. The resolution was the fruit of an intrigue among three or four Orange adherents, members of the corporate body of Middelburg—the town of Zealand where the States of Zealand met. The intriguers, relying on the undivided devotion of the clergy and community of Middelburg to the House of Orange,[1] and hearing on all sides the popular voice calling for a captain and admiral general, conceived that if they could induce the Zealand States to pass a resolution in favor of the election of a captain-general, other provinces would follow their example; and even Holland itself would be constrained to yield before the overwhelming force of the public demand. When the intriguers of Zealand were thus setting their machinery in motion, Tromp was just beginning to imprison Ayscue in the Downs. They opened a correspondence with Prince William, the Friesland stadtholder, with two objects—first, that of ascertaining whether he would accept the lieutenantship under the young Prince; and, second, that of invoking his aid and influence, at the proper moment, in carrying out their design.[2]

[1] Pamphlet, *Eutrapelus ofte Middelburgs Practje*, printed at Middelburg in 1652 (*Duncaniana Collection*, 1652, vol. iii.). A passage from this anti-Orange pamphlet may be translated. Speaking of the project of Zealand to propose a captain-general, the author says: "One knows well that it comes out of the bosom of two or three Jesuitical preachers, who have no other object than to make factions, quarrels, and discord, to which end they urge the common people seditiously on. . . . The States of Zealand are made to speak of the bad state of affairs. Who is the cause of this but the clergy? It was the clergy who first of all kindled the fire with England. Yea, who is the cause of the present war between the States and England? The clergy, who, with their seditious preaching, in the Hague, in Zealand, and elsewhere, to the common people, have created bad feelings toward the present government of England, which they themselves had helped to form. . . . What reason was there that some preachers, in the Hague, at Delft, and in Zealand, seditiously thundered in their pulpits against the English? Here the preaching and writing against the present government in England had neither end nor measure. Invectives, imprecations, and abuse, notorious books, came out daily," etc.

[2] Sypesteyn's *Geschiedkundige Bijdragen*, eerste aflevering, bijlage i.

This Prince belonged to the Nassau branch of the Orange house, and his ancestors, since the origin of the Republic, had held the stadtholderate of Friesland, Groningen, and the small, conquered, and therefore unrepresented, district of Drenthe. The Nassau branch had, in this way, come to look upon the stadtholdership of these provinces as their birthright, not to be intruded into by the Orange branch. When the stadtholdership became vacant, in 1641, by the death of the then Count of the Nassau line, the Prince of Orange (Frederick Henry), aiming at the elevation of the Orange branch and at a consolidation of the provinces, succeeded in ousting the Nassau branch from the stadtholderate of Groningen and Drenthe; and it remained excluded until the death of the young hero of the Amsterdam exploit, in 1650. All that was left to the Nassau branch was the stadtholdership of Friesland. Whatever resentment the young Nassau Prince may have at first felt at being thus extruded from two stadtholderships, which were regarded as the appanages of his family, it had long since died away; but the conviction that he had been ungenerously dealt with remained; and when the Amsterdam hero suddenly died, in 1650, he did not scruple about attempting to bring them back to his own line.

As an adviser and intimate friend of the Amsterdam hero in his preliminary disputes with Holland, and as a co-operator in the attack on Amsterdam, the young Nassau Prince had incurred the mistrust of the States of Holland, and even their bitter resentment. He was now stadtholder of Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe, and was aspiring toward the stadtholdership of yet another province. This made Holland dread his ambition, and the influence he was striving to obtain in the Republic. Hence, at one and the same time, he stood on the worst possible terms with Holland, and in an unpleasant relation with the House of Orange. The quick-witted Princess Amalia van Solms (grandmother of the infant Prince) suspected him of aspiring to the captain-generalship itself; in which case she would rather have thrown herself in with Holland, and kept the office vacant until time and the majority of her grandson should determine what the des-

tinies had in store for the lineal representative of her own house.

The Nassau Prince, beaten back from the chief office of the State, was willing, when the Zealand intrigue was communicated to him, to accept the subordinate office of lieutenant of the young Prince. The intrigue was laid before him with a request, several times made, that the secret should be faithfully kept till the hour was ripe; that it should be kept especially from the Princess Amalia, to one of whose daughters he had a few weeks previously been married;[1] but he laid the whole scheme before his mother-in-law, and asked her advice and aid.[2] How the Princess received the scheme we are left to conjecture, for her reply to the Prince's letter is not extant; she appears, however, at this stage of the business to have been favorable to the design. At least, the Nassau Prince proceeded with it cautiously, and duly kept in the background. But he was not quite so eager as the plotters desired. Aerssens of Sommersdyke, also of Amsterdam notoriety—the ostracized Sommersdyke—was taken into their counsels. If the Orange party can come again into power, then he, too, will be lifted once more into the public life from which Holland has expelled him.

The letters by which this intrigue is revealed show that there was much subtle parochial diplomacy executed to insure its success.[3] By August 22, five days after Tromp's return with his storm-shattered fleet, when wrath and amazement were filling every heart, the plotters of Middelburg considered the iron to be hot. The public disappointment made the acceptance of the proposal easy in the two Orange marquisate-towns of Flushing and Vere. Part of the plot was that the schemers of Middelburg, with shallow cunning, should not name the Nassau Prince in their proposal, but merely recommend that some one out of the House of Nassau should be appointed lieutenant-general. Flushing dramatically put forward his name; and Vere, at first reserving the point for con-

[1] Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen*, bijlage, p. 198. [2] Ibid. p. 52.

[3] The correspondence here referred to forms Bijlage i. to Sypesteyn's *Geschiedkundige Bijdragen*, eerste aflevering.

sideration, after a few days also threw in its vote for the Prince.

The three remaining corporate bodies of Zealand had not delivered their opinion when the States of Zealand separated for a fortnight's recess. They had not been separated a week when De Witt and his deputation from Holland (already referred to) arrived in Middelburg, to frustrate this movement, if they could.

Their arrival was a signal for a mob to assemble, every man of the multitude invoking maledictions on Holland, and frantic for the Prince of Orange. The abbey, where the States of Zealand usually met, was surrounded by the mob on the day when the audience was expected, the intent being to do the members of the deputation some bodily violence; but, the assembly being in recess, their purpose was balked. Meanwhile De Witt and his colleagues had proceeded to Flushing, a few miles distant, to inspect the fleet which was being prepared there. At Flushing, also, the mob rose; but too late, as De Witt and his colleagues had dined and departed. They had departed in time, as the Flushing furies had sworn certain threatening oaths against them. The Flushing magistrates were powerless to bridle the incensed mob, who proceeded raging through the town. They found an unhappy drummer beating his rattan, and enlisting men for the fleet in the name of the States-General; him they wrathfully seized and tossed into the nearest canal; they cut his drum in pieces, and compelled enlistments to be invited in the name of the Prince of Orange also, giving the Prince's name precedence even over that of the States-General.[1] The sailors of the fleet, with their wives and children, surrounded the hotel where the deputation had dined, likewise vowing certain personal inflictions if its members were found.

All these demonstrations, which the deputation, by good luck, escaped, came immediately to De Witt's knowledge. He wrote from Middelburg to his father that the deputation must exercise the utmost prudence and moderation.[2] Thus

[1] De Witt's *Brieven*, v. p. 12; Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 745.

[2] MS. De Witt to his father, Middelburg, September 2 (*Hague Archives*). After

far he is a discreet man at least, and will not run his head blindly against stone walls. In another letter we can see that he is decidedly of opinion that these mobs should be bridled and mastered by the magisterial authority: a hint that, if he has his way, he will govern with a strong and resolute hand.[1] The magistrates of Middelburg were not of De Witt's mettle; the burgomaster himself, a friend even to the cause of Holland, appeared before the deputation, confessed that the magistracy was powerless to save them;[2] urged them to leave their proposition in writing with the Zealand Pensionary, that through him it might be submitted to the States of the Province, and to flee from a province where murder would be their certain fate.

Here now comes out the first glimpse we have of the courage and iron will of De Witt. His colleagues shrunk from encountering the mob, and inclined to the burgomaster's proposition to leave their statement in writing, and then to make their exodus from the town. This was not De Witt's reckoning. He declared that the deputation had been sent to enter into oral conference with the States of Zealand, not to leave a written paper with their Pensionary; and this commission he

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giving his father some account of his visit to Rammekens and Flushing, to see the fleet, De Witt thus describes the popular feeling among the Zealanders against Holland: "De luyden alhier en in sonderheyt mede de populace syn soo wij bericht worden tegen myn Heeren van Holland ingenomen, en specialick mede in opsichte van onse commissie die wij wel connen bespeuren van daer seer odieuser overg. te syn, sulx dat wij in ons werk met sonderlinge voorsichticheyt en moderatie sullen moeten gaen?"

[1] De Witt's *Brieven*, v. 12. De Witt, to the Heer van Beuningen, ambassador to Sweden, in describing the riot in front of his hotel and the maltreatment of the drummer, says: "Waer jagens in plaetse van vigoureuse remedien te appliceren, die van de Regeringe niet alleenlyck den voorsz onverlaet ende geweldenaer hebben ongemolesteert gelaeten," etc.

[2] MS. De Witt to a cousin, dated Middelburg, September 5 (*Hague Archives*): "Wy hebben alhier onder de gemeente soodanige dispositie gevonden, dat wij bemerkten dat men gaerne soodaenige sorge voor onse personen soude dragen, dat wy van geene zeeuwsche coortse ofte andre quellen sieckte lang gepeynicht mochten worden, en dat wij de reyscohten om 't huys te vaeren wel souden mogen spaeren immers dat niet noodich soude wesen ons jacht met spys en dranck voor onse personen te voorzien."

would execute, though he executed it alone. As usual, the strongest man carried the day.[1]

The imbecile magistracy, finding that the deputation were determined to appear in the States of Zealand, offered to provide for their safety by stationing the clergy in and around the meeting-place of the States, to preach the mob into order. De Witt scorned to accept safety from the men whose uproarious sermons, and treasonable correspondence with the clergy in other provinces, had blown up this Orange fire, and who themselves should be apprehended by the magistrates as the fomenters of sedition. He bridled the mob in a surer manner: he summoned secretly into Middelburg a number of officers and soldiers, from surrounding garrisons, in the pay of Holland; and, circled round with this body-guard, the deputation marched, through a throng of savage faces, to and from their audience unscathed.[2]

Now it happened all this time that the majority of the magistrates of Zealand were inclined to the principles of Holland; but they loved their cushions, and if they set themselves against the public opinion of their province and the preachers, they would soon be rudely expelled from these comfortable and profitable resting-places.[3] The deputation made no impression on Middelburg; there the Orange phalanx of that town held together, even courageously insisting on a resolution from the States of Zealand, that a captain and a lieutenant general ought to be appointed. The representatives in these States of the five other towns of Zealand were less resolute, and applied to the corporate bodies who appointed them for instructions.[4]

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[1] De Witt's *Brieven*, v. p. 12.

[2] De Witt's *Brieven*, v. 12: "Stellende middeler-tydt by ons selven onder de handt op onse securiteyt soodaenigen ordre, dat wij daerop eeniger maeten gerust konden syn." Wicquefort, *Histoire*, ii. p. 190.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 760.

[4] MS. letter, De Witt to his father, dated Middelburg, September 5 (*Hague Archives*), in which he says that he made the proposition of Holland in very moderate terms and with circumspection, as the community appeared at one time to be on the point of breaking out into riot, and, as the deputation had been informed there had actually been a good deal of rioting, that their persons had been already

This was the utmost concession De Witt and his colleagues could get; and, as a last challenge of defiance to the murderous spirits of Middelburg, he and his colleagues, when setting out for Holland, marched through the town in broad day, and in broad day also embarked at the neighboring Orange town of Vere. There is courage in the man, whatever else there may be. He is conscious that the deputation has merely warded off the danger. All round him the smoke of this question of a captain-generalship is covering the Dutch sky. In Amsterdam a mutiny broke out in the now recovered remnants of Tromp's great fleet (on a question of wages), in the course of which the sailors forced their way into the magisterial chamber, and swore they would cut their wages out of the magistrates' "hides," if they were not paid in full. The mutiny was only suppressed by the soldiers and the executioner. In Gelderland the Orange party was also afoot. And now at last, within a fortnight after De Witt's mission, a resolution from Zealand came forth, and was printed and scattered broadcast over the land, in favor of the appointment of a captain-general and a lieutenant-general. The compact Orange faction in the province had overcome the waverers, who dreaded the mob, and loved their cushions better than their principles. A clause in the resolution declared that during the Prince's minority his education should be undertaken by the State.[1] De Witt was indignant, and wrote bitterly to one of his Zealand correspondents, as if the deputation had been betrayed by the Zealand States.[2] The resolution, however, contained

threatened: "Dat oock by eenige voorgenomen war, en met diere belofte bevesticht dat se ons int' ingaen naer de v'gader. ofte int' weder uyt comen ons t'leven souden brengen, sulx dat soo by de Heere Staten van den provincien en de magistract van Middelburg als mede by ons int' particular en onder de handt op onse securiteyt ordre gestelt was."

[1] *Resolutien*, Staten van Zeeland, September 21, 1652.

[2] MS. De Witt to Justus de Huybert and another, end of September (*Hague Archives*). De Witt writes: "And I must be permitted frankly to say that I, and many other gentlemen with whom I have spoken, not only in the province of Holland, but in other provinces, ay, even in the provinces where Count William of Nassau is stadtholder, have read this resolution with excessive astonishment, and have not been able to trace the very least indication of the old correspondence with the Heeren of Holland, which has existed from of old." He then proceeds:

the weapon of its own doom. Had the States of Zealand been properly handled by the intriguers, the next step should have been to appoint their own provincial stadtholder, and to bring the question of a captain-general and a *locum tenens* before the States-General. It merely contained a clause that conferences should be held on the subject with the other provinces, and particularly with the States of Holland: a fatal provision, by which the simple Zealand fly entangled itself in the meshes of Holland's superior diplomacy. The Nassau Prince was not in the hands of skilful friends.

"Jae dat oock de voorz resolutie boven den generael innchoude van dien in vele clausulen culpeert en taxeert de hooge regieringe, en in dien deele de lasteringen nu eenige tyd herwaerts by de gemeente en verscheyden provincien en by sonderlich in de prov. van Zeeland tegens haere hooge overicht, en de gemeene regeringe uitgespogen aucthoriseert en de quaelt spreecken menschen int' gelyck stelt."

Chapter VII.

VICE-ADMIRAL DE WITH.

With Tromp in disgrace and De Ruyter the undisputed sovereign of the English Channel, another fleet (composed of the ships which Tromp had brought back with him from the Orkneys, and those which, supposed to have been lost, had survived the storm) had been fitted out for sea. It was to be placed under Vice-Admiral Witte Cornelis de With, who, for the time being, was to supersede Tromp in his high command. Vice-Admiral de With had no connection, by blood or otherwise, with the Dordrecht De Witts.[1] Born near the town of Brill, of poor peasant parents, Baptists by profession, in the spring of 1599, he was almost of an age with our own Cromwell. The boy was of a restless, unsettled disposition: he tried many things; was first a rope-maker, then a button-maker, a leather-maker, a sail-maker, and next a tailor; until at last, in his seventeenth year, he found his calling on the sea. He had lost his father in his third year; and probably his poor, much-tried mother did not know what to do with a son who had got himself clandestinely baptized at eleven years of age, as other boys would not fight with him so long as he was unbaptized, and who would not remain at any trade. His first employment in his new field was as a cabin-boy, in the service of the Dutch East India Company, on thirteen shillings a month. Going out to Batavia, he became butler and body-servant to Governor Coens, of the Amboyna tragedy; helped to defend Fort Jacatra (now Batavia) against the English;

[1] It is surprising that M. Guizot has confounded this admiral with the brother of the statesman. In this, however, he has been misled by an English writer, to whose *Life of Blake* he appears to have trusted. See M. Guizot's *Histoire de la République d'Angleterre et de Cromwell*, i. 281.

showed no lack of courage, and returned to his father-land in his twentieth year. He then joined the State fleet, and began rapidly to rise. His aged mother, after twenty years of widowhood, and before her eyes closed in death, saw her boy, in the dawn of his manhood, promoted to the command of one of the war ships of the State. Fourteen years, spent for the most part in active service, had given him so high a reputation that, when the lieutenant-admiralship of the fleet became vacant, in his thirty-eighth year, the States-General hesitated between him and Tromp, and were finally swayed in favor of the latter, in consequence, it is said, of De With's bad temper. De With, however, at the same time, they created vice-admiral. He was a hot, quarrelsome, jealous-natured man, and made himself enemies on all sides by his fiery choler. He began his new vice-admiralship by a quarrel with Tromp, whom he could not forgive for having distanced him in the race; and his whole vice-admiralship was a round of continuous quarrelling with Tromp, Vice-Admiral John Evertsen, De Ruyter, and the captains under himself. He was an unquenchable firebrand thrown into the fleet. His rigor and severity, and the harsh, ungovernableness of his temper, brought him abundance of dislike from the men. But he was a man of headlong, impetuous courage, and, if he went through life blustering and quarrelling with all about him, he could also fight battles and win victories. So impetuous and eager for the fight was he, that he went under a nickname among his countrymen, which we can only translate "Bellicose."[1] The first few years of his vice-admiralship were spent in aiding to complete the destruction of the naval power of Spain; and when Sweden sprung down upon Denmark, and wrested from her many provinces, in 1644 and 1645, he guarded, with a fleet, the interests of the Republic in the Baltic. In 1647 he was sent to Brazil, provincial jealousies having at last permitted the despatch thither of a fleet to prop up the tottering dominion of the West India Company. In Brazil he found incompetence, dishonesty, and provincial interests ruling; the simu-

[1] "Vechtgraagheid."

lacrum of a government, there, he could stir up to no enterprise against the Portuguese enemy: none that carried the smallest hope of success. He quarrelled with, and chafed against, the high imbeciles and dishonesties of the colony; stormed, and fretted away his fiery life inactively beneath the sultry skies; called out for employment, now that the States-General had at last sent him to the aid of the colony, and got none; wrote to the States-General that he was no longer an admiral, but was made a mere lubber; ate up his year's provisions, and could barely wring food, could, in fact, wring only the scantiest supplies of it, out of the high, wrangling imbeciles; wrote again strong, savage letters home to the States-General, intimating that his men were starving, and demanding his recall; got no answer from the States-General; then, seeing his ships worm-eaten, and his men starved and half-naked, turned stormfully his back upon the colony, and left it to its fate, declaring "that he would rather serve the great Turk than the West India Company on the Hunger-mountain of the Recife." For returning, without orders, Prince William II., as captain and admiral general, placed him under arrest, lodged him in prison, and appointed a court to try him; but Holland averred that he was in provincial employment, and that the arrest was a violation of its provincial sovereignty; so it sent its fiscal to release him forcibly from prison. After the Prince's death, Holland consented to his trial, and he was sentenced to lose his pay during his return voyage, and to bear the costs of the trial. Beneath the covering shield of Holland, De With found additional reasons for attaching himself to the anti-stadtholder party; while Tromp, on the other hand, without mixing himself in political questions, was a known Orangeman.

"Bellicose," since Tromp's disgrace, was now at the head of the fleet, though he still remained vice-admiral. So far had the little boor-boy travelled since he first landed, fifty-three years ago, on the High-dike of Brill. He had to see, also, with his own eyes, whether the ships which were being fitted out for him were properly equipped. He found defects enough, and wrote, in loud, round terms, to the States-General

that to send forth such a fleet was scandalously to expose the Republic to dishonor. The States-General, by this time inured to De With's grumbling nature, did not listen to his complaints, and with the fleet, such as it was, he had to put to sea. He naturally went to take his place on Tromp's ship, which was the heaviest of the fleet. Its crew, enraged at the treatment their beloved Tromp was suffering, and hating De With with no half hatred, would not receive him, and threatened to pitch him overboard if he set foot on their ship. Trying another ship, he found it in charge of a superannuated commander, with incompetent steersmen, and untrained and drunk sailors on board. Superseding every officer of this vessel, on which he now displayed his admiral's flag, he ran out to sea; discovered, after a few days, that the water on board the fleet was stinking, the beer bad, and the men sick and deficient in numbers.[1] Whereupon followed explosive letters to the States-General.

The intention of the government was that De With should effect a junction with De Ruyter, which was absolutely necessary, as Blake was now at sea, with a powerfully equipped fleet of sixty-five or seventy sail. "Bellicose," for once belying his name, appears to have toyed with convoying home six rich silver-laden ships from Spain, leaving De Ruyter either to his seamanship or the mercy of Blake. The government at the Hague knew that Blake was out, and feared lest Blake's object was to cut off De Ruyter before De With joined him, destroy his fleet, and then turn upon De With and overwhelm him. Blake was actually hurrying to the west, in search of De Ruyter, with that very object, and had effected at the same time a junction with Ayscue; but De Ruyter, knowing he was too weak for Blake, had passed him with safety, and was sailing with all speed to the east, where, if De With had failed to join him, he at least would join De With. Blake and Ayscue, with their united fleets, had now wheeled round on De Ruyter's track, and were pursuing him eastward along the Channel, straining every cord to come up with him, and

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 747.

give him battle before he could join De With.[1] With difficulty De With had been able to keep his ships together in some rough weather off Calais; but, on October 2, De Ruyter joined De With's fleet in the Straits of Dover,[2] and Blake and Ayscue, disappointed, retired for a few days to the Downs.

Of De Ruyter's original fleet of thirty ships, eleven had been so damaged in the battle off Plymouth as to be unfit to take part in an engagement, and all his fire-ships were in like condition. They were, therefore, sent to the Netherland havens. De Ruyter's fresh-water was also exhausted, and his stores were low. He brought only seventeen or eighteen ships, such as they were, to De With's, which numbered forty-five, making a fleet of sixty-two or sixty-three sail.[3]

Between October 2 and 8 "Bellicose" was still struggling with rough seas off the sandy Flemish coast, and writing to the States-General for water that did not stink. Some of his ships had been considerably damaged by the high winds and wild seas; nevertheless, he had a galliot in the Downs watching Blake,[4] who was lying secure there from wind and sea; nay, he had resolved, the moment the wind favored, to penetrate into the Downs and give the British admiral battle in his own anchorage-ground.[5]

On the 8th, De With's fleet was smitten, scattered, and in confusion, by a gale of the previous day;[6] and Blake, issuing from the Downs in splendid fighting order,[7] unexpectedly ap-

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[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. i. p. 55.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid. ii. i. p. 59.

[4] Pamphlet *Waarachtig Schryvens uit Rotterdam aengaende den zeeslag tusschen W. C. de Witte en Blake, den* October 8 and 9 (*Duncaniana Collection*, 1652). This galliot had been sent out by the committee on secret correspondence, of which John de Witt was a member. De Witt's *Brieven*, v. p. 22.

[5] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 750; De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. part i. p. 56.

[6] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 750.

[7] John de Witt gives a somewhat different version of the meeting of the fleets at this engagement, derived from the crew of the galliot already referred to. By their account, De With sought Blake in the Downs, to give him battle. This cannot be reconciled with the fact that his fleet had not recovered from the effects of the previous rough weather. Moreover, Aitzema, quoting De With's own letter to the States-General, says that he had intended to go to the Downs to attack Blake, but that the latter anticipated his movement, and offered him battle while

peared before him.[1] There was no time to call a council of war, and on the genius alone which had carried the boor-boy forward to this hour must he now depend. The red war-flag was run to his mast-head, advice yachts sped to the scattered ships, ordering them to close in, to stand by each other, and do their duty. The fleet grouped itself into four divisions; De Ruyter leading the van; De With himself the centre; an Amsterdam commander, De Wilde, leading the rear; while the fourth, under Commander Evertsen,[2] was to act as a reserve where needed. It was three o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, October 8, when the battle began.

The three commanders led on their divisions, or those of their divisions that would follow them; and De With, impetuous, plunged into the English fleet, to attack with his light vessel Blake's heavily armed ship, the *Resolution*. Some of his ships kept at a tolerably safe distance, others sneaked to the leeward, and lay behind the fighting portion of the Dutch fleet. De With himself was foremost in the battle, exposed to a wide circle of the enemy's fire.[3] In a short time his sails, rigging, and masts were blown to pieces, and his ship lay unmanageable upon the water, but fighting obstinately. He wrote to the States-General that, for three hours, "he saw nothing but smoke, fire, and English."[4] Glimpses, however, through the thick smoke had made known to De With, and all his three subordinate commanders, that a number of ships had abandoned him in the critical hour. In his journal the same night he records that some of them shot into the enemy over, or through, the Netherland fleet itself. They were chiefly Zealanders;[5] and, what was more natural, looking to the condition of Zealand, boiling over, as it was, with hatred of the new order of things in the State. There were, therefore,

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the Dutch fleet was still in confusion. Compare John de Witt's *Brieven*, v. p. 22, and Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 750.

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 57.

[2] Cornelius Evertsen, not vice-admiral John.

[3] MS. De With's Journal, in cahier. *Hague Archives.* [4] Ibid.

[5] MS. Vice-Admiral de With's Journal (*Hague Archives*) and *Onstelde Zee*; also John de Witt's *Brieven*, v. p. 44.

three motives for the treachery: their Orange-worship; their wrath at the disgrace of Tromp, who, though a Hollander, was an Orangeman, and in the pay of the province of Zealand; and their dislike to De With, who was hated for his savage humor, for superseding Tromp, and for being an admiral in the pay of the odious government of Holland.

It was, for the most part, a short-range battle, and darkness suspended the issue till the following day. During the night, Blake was strengthened by the accession of another squadron, which raised his strength from sixty-five to eighty-five sail.[1] But the Zealand traitors, under cover of the darkness, had slunk out of the fleet, and retreated to their native province.[2]

Wednesday morning, October 9, dawned to find both fleets repairing the damage of the previous afternoon, and making ready to renew the encounter. In the dim, gray morning twilight De With summoned his captains on board, and, faithful and faithless there before him, addressed them in earnest tones. Witness the rugged sailor standing in the dim morning air, the sea around them black with ships, chiding, imploring, praying with folded hands that they would fight for the honor of their father-land. "For the faithless among you," he urged, "there is wood enough at home to provide a gibbet."[3] But the faithless had ears that would not hear.

De With's own zealous soul was burning to renew the hot venture of battle—"Vechtgraagheid," ever burning to fight. Raising his anchor, he moved easterly to join his division, begetting a counter movement on the part of Blake. De With saw it, halted, and wheeled fierily toward the English fleet, his rude, fierce heart in flame. He looked around: many of his ships were following him reluctantly, slowly; some were already retreating. Treachery again! In vain he fired signal-shots toward them to close in in his rear. Even his own division would scarcely advance, and the retreating captains would not return. The stormy, rude man himself had to

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 750.

[2] MS. Vice-Admiral de With's Journal; De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 59.

[3] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 58.

pause in his charge upon the English fleet, and consider anew what was to be done.

Summoning De Ruyter and Evertsen on board, he held a council of war. The calmer head of De Ruyter had already gauged the situation, and he maintained it was impossible to attack the enemy, with treachery and lukewarmness in the fleet, and with overpowering odds on the side of the English. The utmost that could be done was to await any attack the English might make, and heroically defend themselves. Evertsen was of the same opinion. De With's impetuous nature urged an aggressive battle; but he could not move the calculating judgment of De Ruyter. Disappointed and savage, a chafed and caged bear, the rude, brave man consented to lie inactive unless Blake would give him occupation.

Blake himself had suffered terribly, and could not renew the attack until the afternoon. Even then it was weak, and fell upon the rear body of De With's fleet, which implies that De With was retreating. During the night more of his ships abandoned him, and slunk away to Zealand. Twenty or twenty-one vessels in this way stole from his fleet, and it is said that of the forty which remained with him he could not count on the fidelity of more than fifteen.[1] On the morning of the 10th another council of war was held, and it was at last resolved, under the desperate circumstances, to retreat to Goeree, the nearest haven of the father-land.

Need we say that the explosive man immediately denounced, with due vehemence, the traitors who had deserted him, and demanded their punishment? By custom, the respective boards of admiralty exercised the right of jurisdiction over the men in such vessels as they equipped; but they administered justice with a very uneven hand, and the guilty often escaped. To leave these Zealand traitors to the Zealand board of admiralty, in the present state of that province, was to let them go unpunished, with loud acclaim from its rebellious community. The States-General appointed a special tribunal,

[1] See the pamphlet *Waarachtig Schryvens uit Rotterdam*, already cited. Wicquefort adopts the same estimate, but does not quote his authority. *Histoire*, ii. p. 152. Compare Aitzema, iii. p. 751.

consisting of one deputy from each board of admiralty, to examine into the treason, to arrest the traitors, and convey them to the Hague. A violent conflict of authority thereupon arose between the Boards of Admiralty and the States-General, the former claiming the right of jurisdiction, and even refusing to deliver up the accused captains. Here was "home rule" run to seed. The special tribunal appointed by the States-General sat for several months, and imposed various punishments, such as fine, degradation, or suspension; but it appears that not one of the sentences was ever executed. The States-General might sentence; but there was no power in the Republic to prevent the Zealand (or any other) board of admiralty from tearing the sentence to pieces, and reappointing the culprits the same hour. Under an Orange captain-generalship, anarchy could not have proceeded so far; under the theory of the party to which John de Witt allied himself, the result stated was its natural outcome.

In this way Vice-Admiral De With's dream of glory ended, and Tromp, who had walked about in disgrace from the middle of August to the beginning of November, was replaced at the head of the fleet, after passing through the refining fire of an official investigation. The sovereign spirit of the weather-beaten old sailor had been bruised by the treatment he had received; and, in accepting the charge, he complained in mild and magnanimous terms to the States-General of the misinterpretation to which his best intentions were exposed at the hands of his enemies.[1] To protect himself, he desired that some deputies should be appointed by the government to accompany him to sea;[2] but the request was refused, with a declaration that he possessed the confidence of the States-General.[3]

The naval force which Tromp now commanded numbered

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[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. part i. p. 67, quoting Tromp's letter to the States-General, of November 7, 1652.

[2] Van Wyn, etc., *Byvoegsels en Aanmerkingen voor het twaalfde deel der Vaderlandsche Hist. van Wagenaar*, p. 107.

[3] Ibid.; but see Wicquefort, *Hist. des Provinces Unies*, ii. p. 153, "On n'en estoit pas satisfait."

ninety ships of war, eight fire-ships, and eight galliots.[1] He put to sea on December 1, with the object of starting five hundred merchantmen on their voyage westward through the Channel. Vice-Admiral De With had command of one of the squadrons, but became unwell, and returned on shore. A portion of the fleet appears, ultimately, to have been told off to protect the merchantmen, while Tromp went to the English coast in search of Blake. The fleets met off Dover, and the battle which followed, on December 10, ended in the complete defeat of the English (who were quite outnumbered), and their retreat under cover of the night. Tromp, next morning, summoned a council of war, to deliberate whether the Dutch fleet should not sail up the Thames—a forecast of the great expedition to Chatham many years later, when John de Witt would be at the summit of his power. The daring design could not be carried out for want of pilots.

[1] De Jonge, *Zeewesen*, ii. part i. p. 68; Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 762.

Chapter VIII.

GLEANINGS IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF DE WITT.

The Orange party, when it began its agitation in favor of the appointment of a captain-general, had not foreseen one difficulty which lay on the threshold. It was no sooner known that the party was astir in Zealand than four competitors appeared in the field for the lieutenantship under the young Prince as captain-general—viz., the Nassau Prince, Count Maurice the Brazilian, Brederode, and Beverweert, a natural son of the deceased Prince Maurice. Each had his body of supporters throughout the provinces; and the party thus split presented but a feeble front to united Holland. The elder Princess of Orange—Amalia van Solms—now also began to profess herself a convert to the doctrine that it was inexpedient at present to appoint the young Prince to office. She had come to realize the fact that the child's election did also require the appointment of a lieutenant, as master of the Republic, for the twenty years of his minority, and the sagacious woman saw the dangers this implied to the cause of her house.

As the resolution of Zealand had been widely published, and as the fire was smouldering in all the provinces, the States of Holland deemed it necessary to meet the resolution by an equally public counter-resolution, against the election of a captain-general. Dordrecht, and therefore De Witt, as its Pensionary, was again at the head of a committee appointed to consider the Zealand resolution, and to frame the counter-manifesto of Holland. It is probable that the idea of such a counter-manifesto originated with De Witt. He presented the report, at least, in the committee's name, to the States of Holland; and the result, after some hesitation from the corpora-

tion of Leyden,[1] was a unanimous resolution (date, December 4, 1652), which, from the phalanx-like cohesion of the towns of Holland, shattered, for a time, the hopes and plottings of the Orange party throughout the Republic. Holland had seduced Zealand into interminable conferences; and the resolution, which had caused so much commotion, was never brought before the States-General. This is how De Witt writes of the present issue of the agitation, to a correspondent, on December 16: "I expect that the business of the captain-generalship will not interrupt much more the deliberations of the States of Holland, as I observe that the zeal of its advocates begins considerably to cool, and that their hope of success appears to be taken away by the unanimous resolution of December 4."[2] To strengthen the resolution, an "argument" against any alteration of the established order of government was drawn up, and forwarded to the other provinces. This document was merely an adaptation of various "reasons" previously delivered to the Zealand deputies. By such means the Orange plot was defeated for a time.

This was the leading direction of De Witt's manifold activity in these days. In what other directions his influence was now making itself felt will never be fully known. The man and his doings, the real biography and life of him, at this time are buried in thick darkness. To get at the man as he lived, and walked, and worked, in that Hague life of his, is an impossibility. To ascertain such a thing as how he clothed or fed himself, is a vain endeavor; to discover that he relished

[1] "Ernstig Gesprek voorgevallen tusschen drie Personen nopende onse en der Engelsche gelegentheyd" (*Duncaniana Pamphlets*, 1652). The writer (whose words we translate) says: "I believe that the Pensionary of Leyden, the schepens of Leyden, and all those who speak evil of the Louvesteyn heeren, are themselves rogues and traitors, who do not stand forth for the country, but for their own interest and passions. . . . Various of the towns of Holland held with the Prince, of which the chief was Leyden, which town alone turns the wheels after its Pensionary, and some of his followers, who work out everything in the town according to their base appetite. Now, the Pensionary of Leyden is a sworn friend, pensionary, and hireling of Aerssens, Lord of Sommersdyk; and Sommersdyk is a sworn enemy of all the Louvesteyn gentlemen, and also one of the chief advisers of the imprisoning of the six members, as well as of the siege of Amsterdam."

[2] MS. De Witt to Van Beuningen, December 16. *Hague Archives.*

good beer and drank French wine, is, in the barren wilderness, like finding a treasure. What we know of him, in his actual, practical doings, has all to be painfully pieced together, out of mountains of letters, printed and unprinted; and when the patchwork is done, we find that hardly a lineament of the man and his work has been set forth. We have no Boswell, or homely Dutch gossip, to light up his figure for us; and his letters, while throwing no inconsiderable light on the history of the Republic, throw little upon himself. There is scarcely one single reference to his own personal pursuits or tastes. Even to his father and brother, there is the stiffest, stateliest reserve. His letters are the mere notes of a chronicler. He is the baldest, the most meagre, though he is also a clear enough, annalist.

Out of these unplastic and barren materials we have to discover what the man's views were on some other questions of the day around him. The appointment of a committee on English affairs, by the States of Holland, suggested the creation of similar committees to examine the Swedish, Danish, and French correspondence,[1] present its points to the States, and advise them thereon. Of these committees De Witt, or, to speak more correctly, Dordrecht, was a member. Nevertheless, the quotient is miserably small.

First. Sweden was the pivot on which all his schemes turned. If possible, a friendly alliance with that country must be obtained against England; failing that, the neutrality of Sweden must be secured; and failing also that, the hostility of Sweden must be checkmated by means of treaties with her enemies. In the middle of the summer a faithful and zealous Hollander (Van Beuningen) was sent to Stockholm as ambassador, to work out these objects. De Witt was eager to enlist Sweden on the side of the United Provinces, but he soon saw that no active help would be found in her. This expectation was a rapid judgment formed from Van Beuningen's report of his reception, and of the internal condition of Sweden.

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[1] De Witt, *Brieven*, v.; De Witt to Van Beuningen, September 14, 1652, pp. 13–15.

But the singular thing in this Swedish negotiation is, that the Dutch never realized—even De Witt himself did not realize—that if Sweden rendered them assistance against England, she would expect corresponding assistance from them in her quarrels with Muscovy and Poland. This the Dutch would never give; they did not want to set up one great dominating power in the Baltic. Something, however, would be gained if Van Beuningen's diplomacy could secure the bare neutrality of Sweden; and De Witt was nimbly active in laboring to remove some petty grievances which Sweden put forward.[1]

Second. It is strange that, at this moment, De Witt was strongly in favor of bringing about a settlement of the great Northern question of the day. He wanted to convert the twenty-six years' truce, which had been entered upon, in 1635, by Sweden and Poland, into a permanent peace between these two powers.[2] This was his view of what Dutch policy in the Baltic should be, in September and October, 1652. In this he was short-sighted, unless he thought it would secure the coveted alliance with Sweden. But we cannot tell whether his opinion remained the same when the mediators, the delay in whose departure had led to much comment, actually set out. There had been much conflict of opinion as to what their instructions should be, and at last they departed with two contradictory orders—a public one, to bring about a lasting peace; and a private one, so to manage that the mediation should fail.[3] De Witt's father was one of the mediators, and consented to execute this act of infamy. Of De Witt's own relation to it nothing can be discovered.

Third. When a few weeks had shown that Van Beuningen could not induce Sweden to take up arms against England,

[1] Any one reading Van Beuningen's early letters will find the name of Joachim Groot-Johan constantly recurring, and his case mentioned as almost the sole obstacle to an offensive alliance with Sweden against England. This was an exaggeration of the Queen and the Swedish government, who used it as a foil against Van Beuningen's persistent pressure. De Witt saw that it was a mere pretext used by Christina to get rid of Van Beuningen; the latter himself did not. De Witt, though he tried hard, did not succeed in getting the grievance removed.

[2] De Witt, *Brieven*, v. pp. 13, 19.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 781.

the expedient of a triple alliance between Sweden, Denmark, and the United Provinces captivated nearly all minds in the Republic; and Van Beuningen was instructed to sound the Swedish government thereon. De Witt already understood this part of the Northern question too thoroughly to look upon an alliance between Sweden and Denmark as a possible thing.[1] The somewhat soft-minded Van Beuningen, though he had the advantage of studying this suggestion in Stockholm itself, actually indulged in the vain dream of effecting such a treaty.

Fourth. Sweden being surrounded with enemies more or less pronounced, the next question was how to checkmate her, if necessary. For this purpose De Witt advocated that an embassy should be sent to the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire. He labored zealously to get this embassy despatched; but he confesses he had little hope of overcoming the "customary slowness," as he calls it, of his countrymen.[2] Thus, in the second year of his public life, he is awake to the defects of the slow-rolling, cumbrous government to which they were all committed. Let us again remark, in justice to De Witt, that the sluggard action of these great rolling wheels of State, slow-circling, with sleepy wheels within sleepy wheels, was not the result of a stadtholderless government. With a Prince of Orange as stadtholder, the evil was lamentably great; but without a stadtholder, and with every province and town, in the exercise of its sovereign liberty of opinion and action, colliding against and clogging its neighbor, often till its own petty ends were served, it was lamentably greater. Knowing all this, and seeing the effects of it in the production of delays injurious to the State, De Witt did not revise his theory of government, but threw all his energy into the establishment of a system whereby the power of all the clogs and drags was intensified many-fold.

Fifth. There was talk at this time also of reopening a suspended negotiation with the Elector of Brandenburg, sus-

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[1] De Witt, *Brieven*, v. 57.

[2] Ibid. v. pp. 13, 14: "Onse ordinaris traegheyt in de besoignes."

pended because Holland would not include the Baltic possessions of the Elector, as well as his Rhenish duchies, in the defensive alliance. A combination with the Emperor and Elector, if effected, would have threatened Sweden's conquests on the southern shores of the Baltic, and paralyzed her action elsewhere. On this point we have no expression of De Witt's opinion.

Sixth. De Witt advocated also the sending of an embassy to the Hanse Towns, to negotiate a treaty of friendship, and rupture with England; and, as a member of the committee appointed to frame the instructions to the ambassadors, he voluntarily prepared a draft of the instructions, to quicken, if possible, the slow movements of the governing machine. He got it approved of, with all the speed he could command.[1]

Seventh. Still, De Witt was not disposed to reject Queen Christina's offer of mediation between the United Provinces and England, here differing again, to some extent, from his own party.[2] Van Beuningen stumbled upon the idea that a mediation would produce a suspension of hostilities; but he was in a fog about its *pros* and its *cons*.[3] Hear how De Witt, with his rapid, incisive judgment, by return post to Sweden, shears through the difficulty which had befogged the ambassador: "As regards a provisional suspension of hostilities, I think the same in the highest degree dangerous to this State. So long as the conditions of peace were not fully arranged, we would still require (notwithstanding the suspension of hostilities) to maintain the same strength of fleet, and to continue our preparations for war as at present; and as this State could not long bear the cost thereof, the English would be furnished with a reason for protracting the negotiation and a means of exhausting us. It, therefore, appears to be much better for this State vigorously to use the power we are compelled to maintain. . . . Besides, a cessation of hostilities would excite general dissatisfaction among the community; and it would be extremely difficult to obtain from the same

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[1] De Witt, *Brieven*, v. pp. 13, 17, 19.

[2] Ibid. v. 40.

[3] Ibid. v. 65 (December 14, 1652).

the means necessary to support a powerful fleet if it was kept inactive."[1]

De Witt was to entertain this opinion for three or four months, and then, for reasons unknown, to be converted to Van Beuningen's way of thinking,[2] even after Van Beuningen had näively confessed that he could not understand how the idea of a suspension of hostilities had ever entered his head.[3]

Eighth. One incident more, and we are done with these painful and almost bootless gleanings here. De Witt, by his influence among his colleagues in the States of Holland, attempted to detach from Sweden the admiral fittest to command the Swedish fleet in the event of Queen Christina becoming actively hostile. The idea, however, did not originate with De Witt, but with ambassador Van Beuningen. This admiral was a Dutchman, in the service of the Swedish government, and, having personal grievances against it, had applied to Van Beuningen for service at home. In a reflective moment the ambassador saw the advantage it gave to his own country to deprive Queen Christina, not of her chief, who was very old, but of her ablest admiral; and he wrote to De Witt to use his influence to obtain a command for him in Holland. De Witt for once failed to grasp the full significance of this suggestion; and his colleagues believing that the transference of Christina's admiral would offend many able seamen at home who deserved promotion, and could not get it, De Witt acquiesced, and communicated their refusal to Van Beuningen. The ambassador renewed his appeal, through De Witt, in ampler and more urgent terms; and now De Witt's mind was fired by the idea. He also reiterated his arguments and persuasions in the Hague, which ended in an arrangement for drawing this energetic Dutchman out of Christina's service. The incident illustrates a leading feature in De Witt's character—the frank and open receptiveness of the man to any suggestion that did not contradict his unalterable theory of gov-

[1] De Witt, *Brieven*, January 6, 1652, '3, v. 66.
[2] Ibid. v. 116.
[3] Ibid. v. 85.

ernment. We find no self-sufficiency or conceit in him; he is open as a child to hints from every quarter of the compass.

Beyond what we have here set down, his activity and influence in those days disappear, and are lost sight of in the action, as a whole, of the States of Holland. But, as he had vigor in him, and a faculty of swift, concentrated action, we may conjecture that his sleepless energy communicated a portion of itself to the sluggish element in which he had begun to labor. No hand has lifted the curtain to show us how much of what was resolved upon and done came directly from him.

Chapter IX.

CLOSING THE SOUND.

Tromp's great victory of December 10 made him complete master of the sea for ten weeks, till the end of February, during which time no English fleet was able to appear before him. According to English writers—for the Dutch authorities make no mention of the fact—it was on this occasion that the old hero—now sea-king indeed—mounted his broom at his ship's head, while he scoured the Channel, displaying it as a symbol that he had swept the sea utterly of his foes. If not an old Dutch usage, it had at least been set up once in an earlier century by a Dutch admiral to signalize a victory in the Baltic. And now, again, throughout a whole stormy winter, Tromp displayed it, unchallenged by the enemy. This was the supreme moment of Tromp's life. For ten long weeks his little broom stuck there at his mast-head. He rode about the Channel with it as he listed, lord of that sea about whose sovereignty so many blows had recently been delivered. He threatened the English coasts; it was designed that the awful broom should appear even in the Thames, which it was resolved to blockade; and it was seen as far as St. Martin's Island, on the west coast of France, which was a rendezvous for Dutch merchantmen, until a protecting convoy conducted them home.

Now was the time, then, for the Dutch to get out their merchant fleets, and to bring home the richly laden argosies which were assembling at the appointed stations of St. Martin's or Rouen. This was Tromp's function during his ten weeks of triumphant dominion. Pity it was for the Republic that it happened at a time when, commercially, it could not be of the greatest, or even much, advantage to the Dutch. Winter had

almost closed their trade, or, rather, that which the war had left of it, in the Baltic and North Sea; and the line through the Channel, to France, to Spain, to the Mediterranean, and to India, was the only line effectively open to the enterprise of the Provinces.

The Dutch now covered the sea with privateers, that they might hunt from it every English trading-vessel. Commissions in vast numbers were issued to individuals: more than a hundred were issued within a week.[1] Hollanders and Zealanders vied with each other in acts of daring. The town of Flushing, in Zealand, excelled all rivals in temerity, and in the richness of its spoils, as its corsairs had done in the days of the Spanish war. What injury English commerce sustained throughout the war appears to have been suffered chiefly during the ten weeks when Tromp was sovereign ruler of the deep.

The greatest dread of the Dutch throughout the war was, lest their gigantic Baltic trade should pass into neutral hands; and the privateers were of the utmost service in suppressing the neutral trade of the Baltic, of Bremen, Hamburg, and other non-Dutch ports of Europe. The function of suppressing the trade of neutral Baltic ports devolved mainly on Envoy Keyser, who, from the moment he landed in Copenhagen, in August, 1652, had constituted himself, with the connivance of Denmark, the watch-dog of the Sound: springing upon every vessel that could not elude him, which might enter or leave the Sound for any neutral port whatsoever. Keyser, with a small squadron of Dutch vessels of war (part of which was permanently employed in watching twenty English hemp-ships, arrested by the Danish government at the instigation of the Dutch, and part in seizing neutral traders, while Denmark shut its eyes), was virtually master of the Sound during all this autumn and winter. His instructions were, not to carry his zeal to extremities in the case of Swedish and Spanish ships, it not being convenient to quarrel with powers of the magnitude of Sweden and Spain; from which the inference

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. part i. 80.

naturally followed that the isolated trading-towns of the Baltic were to receive no mercy at his hands. Over these small trading-towns, which were not a match for the great Republic of the Netherlands, the Dutch tyrannized pitilessly, though, by treaty, they were entitled to all the privileges of the treaty between the United Provinces and Spain.

Under the guise of a proclamation forbidding the transport, "directly or indirectly," to England of "any munitions of war, or any materials serving for the outfit of ships,"[1] nearly the whole neutral trade of the Baltic was practically declared to be contraband.

By this proclamation no Swedish, Hamburg, or Lübeck ship would be entitled to carry the chief produce of the Baltic to such neutral places as Flanders, France, or Spain, although the treaty with Sweden, of 1640, and that with Spain, of 1650, both permitted not merely indirect but direct trade with the enemy itself, of either of the contracting parties in time of war, blockaded and besieged places alone excepted.[2] The trade between the Baltic ports and Hamburg or Flanders, or other Continental ports, was undoubtedly a roundabout and disguised trade with England. By that means England had become supplied with materials of war, and sometimes they had reached her through Dutch smugglers from Dutch ports themselves. It was a bold step for the Dutch to cancel at one stroke some of the provisions of their treaties; but it was still more audacious to assert that it was Sweden which was breaking the Swedish treaty by permitting the trade which the treaty expressly allowed, and to call upon her to declare nearly the whole of her produce contraband! The proclamation was issued on December 5, during the winter stagnation of trade, when the interests of neither Sweden nor Spain, nor the Hanse Towns, required any active measures of defence. The farther-seeing minds of the Republic could not be blind to the fact that, when the frozen ports of the North were once more thawed by returning spring, the proclamation, if it was enforced, would bring this question to the test, and would only

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 765.

[2] Ibid. ii. 695, and iii. 480.

end in driving Spain and Sweden and the Hanse Towns to a common alliance with England against the Republic.

Probably this consideration impelled Zealand to renew, with intense earnestness, a cry which she had already raised, of the necessity of an alliance with France, with the view of bringing a new enemy into the field against England and of keeping Spain in check.[1] The relations of France and England were doubtful, though France was courting friendship with the Parliament. The sanguine Zealanders imagined that, to enlist France, they had only to propose to her that she should break with England. The terms even of a ready-made treaty were to be sent to the Dutch ambassador in Paris, providing for a hostile junction of the Dutch and French fleets against the English, on April 1; and, in the event of an attack by land, for mutual succor against any enemy whatever. To an alliance pledging the Dutch to guarantee, to the extent of a certain fixed succor, the whole French territory, its recent conquests included, Holland would not listen. Besides, all the world might have seen that the French government, itself in the agonies of its conflict with the Fronde, could render no help during the present struggle. A French alliance had been the cry, not of the Orange party only, but also of the exiled English Royalists, for some months: facts sufficient to condemn it in the estimation of Holland.[2] The desire of Holland was limited to a merely commercial treaty; and such a treaty Ambassador Boreel had been engaged for two years in attempting to negotiate at Paris. We know that De Witt was in favor of sending an extraordinary embassy to France;[3] and, in the absence of further specific knowledge, we may assume that he adopted the views of his party rather than those of Zealand.

Allusion has been already made to the treacherous mediation between Sweden and Poland. The idea of frustrating the mediation had emanated first of all from Denmark. The Danish cabinet acted on Envoy Keyser, and Keyser acted on

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, ii. 762, 783, '4.

[2] Ibid. iii. 752, '3, 763.

[3] MS. Letter, De Witt to Keyser in Denmark, January 20, 1652, '3.

the States-General, writing of it, not in his public missives, but in his private letters, to that august body. It was the old story of Dutch trade: that a lasting friendly peace between Poland and Sweden would endanger Dutch commerce at the hands of Sweden. It is inconceivable that a man of De Witt's clear judgment could have been led away by this sophistry, or that a man of his known integrity could have approved of an act deliberately violating the public faith. Whether Envoy Keyser's letters acted upon him as on so many others, remains unknown. If Holland saw in Keyser's reasoning the cloven hoof of Denmark itself, it saw, also, looking to the uncertain policy of Sweden, the advantage of having an ally in the rear of that power. The Hollanders were not blind to the fact that Denmark had its own interests to serve in perpetuating the bloody enmity that had raged, with intermittent fury, since the beginning of the century between the two branches of the family of Vasa.

It was not to Denmark's profit that the old quarrel of the Swedes and Poles should be healed. And it was of supreme and vital consequence to her that she should make the Dutch her fast friends, and fill them with apprehensions of Sweden. Accordingly, Keyser carried everything before him in Copenhagen, short of an actual declared breach with England. He was flattered, and poisoned against Sweden. Even the Queen, in a moment of pleasant and courtly adulation, cried out, punning upon his name, "There is no longer a king in Denmark: we are all ruled by a Keyser (Kaiser)." He arranged a treaty, which was sent to the Hague in Christmas week, for ratification by the States-General. In this treaty Denmark did not "break," or commit itself to war, with England; she in no way undertook to join the Dutch fleet, and become an assailant of England. If England kept out of the Sound (and Dutch smugglers and Flemish traders, by their supplies of Baltic produce, would enable her to do that), Denmark, by the treaty, had nothing whatever to do. She had merely agreed to a proclamation, shutting formally the Sound against all English vessels, and to provide annually, during the war, from April 1 to November 1, twenty ships of war to maintain the

said prohibition, and to defend her own merchant-ships, as well as Dutch vessels, in the Sound. She was not to be called upon to enter either the North Sea or the Baltic, save in pursuit of a fleeing enemy. In return, the Dutch bound themselves to defend Denmark with all their power, if she were attacked in consequence of this alliance (aiming at Sweden as well as England); and they undertook to provide the cost of equipping the twenty ships, by advancing the King the subsidy he was bound to contribute (£67,000) and paying the remainder themselves (£19,000).[1] The gain by this alliance was that it blocked up the Sound.

This treaty fulfilled one great political dream of Holland, who would not have lost a day in confirming it; but, from the inaction of the other provinces, it lay for six weeks in the Hague unratified. Zealand was vigorously riding its hobby of the French alliance; and it seemed as if that high-spirited and recalcitrant province would refuse to consent to its ratification, unless Holland bought it off by consenting to its particular scheme of an alliance with France. There were some who shrunk from a treaty which portended, for the future, a complete breaking up of the friendship with Sweden. While it was hanging uncertain at the Hague, Bradshaw arrived at Copenhagen as ambassador from the English Parliament, to require deliverance of the twenty arrested ships. The Danish King, uneasy at the wrangling in the Hague, forthwith intimated to all-potential Keyser that, if the treaty were not ratified, he must release the ships. He had no desire to brave the wrath of England single-handed. Faithful Keyser coaxed the King to toy and play with Bradshaw, and detain him till he communicated with the States-General. A second hint, of a similar kind, from the King, was necessary before the opposition of Zealand was overcome; that province yielded under some concessions from Holland, and the fear of losing the aid of Denmark in the Sound.

The war, not at this time more than six or seven months old, had led both Denmark and Holland to repent of the re-

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 791–'3; see also ibid. 750.

demption treaty, which Amsterdam, by its sheer social and financial weight in the Republic, had forced through the States-General only a year previously. The war had wrought so much havoc in the Dutch trade with the Baltic, that the taxes by which the annual sum for which the Sound tolls were commuted was to be raised, failed by a large amount to meet it.[1] As for Denmark, it was not paid its commutation annuity; and it was debarred from collecting tolls from the Dutch vessels which passed through the Sound. In the winter of 1652, negotiations were opened with Keyser by the King for rescinding the treaty, and restoring the rights in the Sound to their old footing. Keyser's letters to the States-General on this subject prepared the mind of Holland for a formal proposal, in February, 1652, '3, to rescind the treaty.[2] It was immediately accepted by Holland.[3] The indignity of resiling from its position, in the sight of its sister provinces, was softened by the official initiative proceeding from Denmark.

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 761.

[2] De Witt, *Brieven*, v. 88–92.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat.*

Chapter X.

PARALYSIS OF THE DUTCH.—A CLANDESTINE NEGOTIATION WITH ENGLAND.

We turn now to the inward condition of the Republic, and to the effect that seven months of war at sea had produced upon it. During all the trading months of summer, autumn, and early winter, trade had been carried on at incalculable risk. The rates of assurance were sometimes as high as twenty-five per cent.[1] The English had been powerful enough to destroy the great bulk of the Dutch commerce through the Channel. In the North Sea, they had extinguished the Dutch fishery. In the Baltic, a portion of their commerce remained, as the English had not been sufficiently strong to act on all the three lines of trade. The devastation of the Channel trade had brought heavy losses to many merchants, and reduced large numbers of families to idleness and want. The extinction of the herring and whale fisheries (between two and three thousand boats being employed in the former fishery alone) reduced 100,000 men and women, according to Aitzema, and 150,000, according to Wicquefort, to starvation. Fishers, net-makers, curers, boat-builders, exporters by sea, and exporters inland into Germany, all alike found their occupation gone; no outlet for the seafaring portion of them but to enlist in the fleet, and shoot or be shot. A general pause was coming over the industry of the land. The busy wharves and quays were now scenes of listlessness; in the Zuyder Zee a multitude of vessels, not fit to fight and not venturing to trade, was daily accumulating; and the workshops of the land, drawing the materials of their industry from abroad, manufact-

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 762.

uring it, and sending it abroad again, were gradually becoming still. No Dutch writer mentions how the prices of food were affected; but, as the Republic did not produce its own food supply, and as grain could only come in precariously from the Baltic, prices and starvation among the poorer classes must have increased hand-in-hand.

As commerce diminished, so did the income of the State. The fruitful taxes on imports and exports dwindled away. In Amsterdam, the income from the taxes collected by the Board of Admiralty there had fallen off two-thirds; and in Zealand, for every £100 of income formerly, ten pounds only were now obtained. In Gelderland, Overyssel, Utrecht, and the other provinces the heavy drain for the fleet had already all but devoured their small sources of supply; and not only was the income of the State suspended, but its credit was also destroyed. One province offered seven per cent. for a loan of £27,000, and could not obtain the money. A war-ship of the State, lying at Brill, short of some trifling equipments, was only enabled to join the fleet by historian Aitzema (himself not a Netherlander) advancing the necessary funds, as nobody would lend the small amount required.

Income gone, credit gone, and the non-maritime provinces beginning to declare they could no longer continue their quota for the fleet, how was Holland to carry on the war?

The annual cost of the fleet was estimated at £800,000; whereas the cost of the war against Spain had ranged from £100,000 to £200,000 a year.[1] Holland tried various projects of taxation; but the money would not flow into the national exchequer in the necessary abundance. It incited its sister provinces to greater efforts; and suggested that they should tax themselves as heavily as Holland had taxed its subjects; but it met with no response. Even the magistrates of Amsterdam were reduced to telling those of the inhabitants who could not pay the prescribed amount to give what they could. It is in these circumstances that we find De Witt, with all the earnestness of which he was capable, bringing forward an idea

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 764.

which he had advocated before—the opening of a list for voluntary contributions. Privately, and with much effort, he persuaded some influential friends in the government into his own view. But when proposed, it was considered chimerical, and rejected.

To a calm, passionless, and wide-surveying man like De Witt, sitting in the Hague, and overlooking from that centre of political life all these facts, and the confused world around him, even though Tromp and his broom were for the moment cruising triumphantly in the Channel, the outlook could have been nothing but one of the blackest. The keener the eye, the more discouraging the outlook. All around him was distraction: no union anywhere; stagnating trade; taxes, when imposed, not forth-coming; credit gone; the Provinces crying out in exhaustion; Holland's efforts to incite them like so much fruitless galvanism; even Dutchmen smuggling materials of war to the enemy for so much petty gain; and starvation rising, grim and terrible, among the laboring poor. This was what seven brief months of maritime war had done; throe succeeding throe of dissolution through all the industrial fibres of the State. And if the result of seven months' war stood thus staring all men in the face, what would not be the product of another year of fierce hostility?

That was a question too palpable to escape thoughtful men. Let any one who thinks Holland premature in its avowal of a desire for peace realize what it meant to all, save the very rich, in a community depending solely on its foreign commerce. Looking at the condition of the Republic; above all, at the heartless apathy with which Holland's demands for more taxation were answered by its sister provinces, and the provincial antipathies which cursed the Republic, and poisoned vigor and action at their source; the one solitary door which stood open before the better minds of the time was, peace with England.

So, in these days, thought the ruling faction of Holland; and so, as if it was a political evangel, thought the small knot of men who had been committed by the States of Holland to watch over the secret correspondence of the State. Given

such a conviction, given one man of daring and strong purpose, like De Witt, and, the opportunity being forth-coming, conviction will rapidly pass into action.

That opportunity now came. There had already, since September, been in the Hague one Gerbier,[1] with a friend or two, apparently instigated by the notable Hugh Peters, on a voluntary mission of peace.[2] De Witt's clear eye pierced instantly into the worthlessness of this attempt at reconciliation, and he dismissed the men from his thoughts. Although they were unaccredited by the English government, Holland continued to cling even to this empty hope for three months, until its own sense of dignity compelled it to close its ears to men who had no warrant to treat.

Secret correspondence of a kind, irrespective of Gerbier, had been passing backward and forward between the Hague and London for some time, the chief instruments in which appear to have been Lieutenant-Colonel Dolman and another friendly Englishman, Stone, both holding commissions in the Dutch army, and possessing influence with some of the leading men in the English government. They had probably been permitted to visit England, or been sent thither by the States of Holland, to dispose their friends in the Parliament to peace. But there is nothing now to show to what extent the committee of the States of Holland on secret correspondence commissioned them to go. That committee kept a sharp outlook upon the humors of the English government, and watched with keen vision for the birth there of the faintest desire for peace. Letters and visitors kept them informed of the feel-

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[1] Sir Balthazar Gerbier.

[2] De Witt, *Brieven*. De Witt to Van Beuningen, September 14 and 23, v. 15, 16: "Sedert mynen voorgaenden, etc., is Gerbier daer inne geroert des anderen daeghs alhier aengekomen; syn addres is geweest aen den Heer Nieupoort met een brief van Mr. Hugo Petri, met last omme sigh mede aen te geven aen den Heer van Heemstede . . . gelyck hij oock by absentie van gemelden Heer Nieupoort gedaen heeft, ende aen den selven eerst ende voor al getoont copye ofte translaet van de voorsz brief daer inne onder aenderen stont dat de voornoemde Gerbier met kennisse ende door last van Cromwel, Whitelock, Henry Vane, Bondt ende meer andere Heeren van't Parlement van Engelandt overgekomen waer," etc. p. 16. See also Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 732.

ings of the Parliament. These preliminary comings and goings, and secret non-official communications, are all hidden from us: lost to history, as they were kept concealed at the time from Holland's confederates in the Republic. Only when England is reported ripe for an effort at negotiation does this peace mission, which Holland had sent into England, or established there, first step forth out of the oblivion that wraps up all its earlier doings. It is De Witt's hand, in an unpublished cipher letter, of February 3, to Van Beuningen in Stockholm, which has rescued for us the very earliest step in that clandestine negotiation, which Holland now began, for peace.[1]

Out of this letter, it appears that the committee was made to believe, by its peace missionaries in England, that the leading men of the English government were inclined for peace; that all that was wanted was a note from Grand Pensionary Pauw to one or other of them, stating that a similar inclination existed in Holland; that Pauw demurred to sending off

[1] MS. *Hague Archives.* This letter is of great length, and is introduced by a request that Van Beuningen would not hand it to a clerk to be deciphered, but would decipher it himself. It then proceeds thus: T' sedert het

4 15 37 9 48 18 38 22 16 37 van 1000 daer
aenbrengen Gerbier

van. ick V. Ed. voor deses communicatie gegeven hebbe alhoewel daerop geen fundament gemaeckt heeft connen worden gelyk ick V. Ed. oock voor deses breeder hebbe geadviseert is de gecomm: van de secrete corresp^e echter soo nu soo dan en door brieven van 14 15 48 50 16 33 54 17 49;
der selver

11 39 48 49 18 51 44 40 37 13 19 38 52 15 37;
correspondenten

26 38 157 en door persoonen 54 63 52; 157; 4 34
in Englandt uyt Englandt al

24 27 16 48; 22 17 5 49 48 28 55 18 19 49 52 vooge-
hier gearriveert

comen dat 14 15; 35 16 17 38 53 18 ende 6 18 37 51 29 16 37
de meeste aensienlijkste

34 63 12 31 50 53 49 16 22 17 38 53 18 38 aldaer
regenten

50 15 16 49 22 18 26 37 11 34 30 38 18 19 48 53
seer geinclineert

and so on, through several pages of figures, all in De Witt's own handwriting. As the key exists, I have been enabled to interpret the cipher.

such a letter, in his own name, without the sanction of the States of Holland; that the States of Holland, under oath of secrecy, were informed of the communications received from England, and the recommendation of Stone (Dolman's colleague); that they authorized Pauw to send a letter to such person in England as he thought proper; that a missive, signed by Pauw, was accordingly prepared for Sir Oliver Fleming, Master of Ceremonies; that a duplicate, without address, was intrusted to Stone, to be delivered, in Fleming's absence, or, failing Fleming for other reasons, to those with whom it would be most efficacious; and that the two letters were given to Stone on February 2, and conveyed by him to England.

One thing more of some moment, as will afterward appear, is patent from this letter—that the committee on secret correspondence was desirous of opening this clandestine negotiation with England without even informing the States of Holland, holding that the resolution which created them gave them power so to do. The desire for peace had thus become a mastering passion of the ruling faction in Holland. Another cipher letter of De Witt, written to his father only a week after Stone had set out with these missives to England, shows that the faction in Holland were willing to accept the mediation of Sweden, again offered by Christina, if England would indicate its readiness to submit the quarrel to the Swedish Queen.[1]

Thus the clandestine negotiation began, and it was in this initial stage of its progress when Grand Pensionary Pauw died, on February 21, between a fortnight and three weeks after its opening. Until Holland could make up its mind about a permanent successor, De Witt was intrusted (on March 1) with the conduct of the business of the province.[2] De Witt's youth probably prevented the States of Holland

[1] MS. cipher letter to his father, of February 9, 1653; see also MS. letter of De Witt to Beuningen, of February 16, where he says he is anxiously awaiting the answer of England on the offer of mediation. The latter communication appears imperfectly in De Witt's published *Brieven*. See original in *Hague Archives*.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 87.

from making the appointment permanent at first. In its chief officer the province required capacity, and fidelity to its own maxims, and it proceeded cautiously in choosing its man. De Witt wanted about seven months of being thirty years of age. Never before had the office been filled by so young a Pensionary. Old Ruyl, of Haarlem, who, with De Witt's father, had undergone the Louvesteyn imprisonment, was courteously proposed by the Dordrecht deputies for the office; but all the others voted for De Witt.[1] Faint and far between as are the traces of his footsteps during the two years and two months that he has been in the States of Holland—painful as it is, out of the oblivion that surrounds his form, to decipher his character and thought, he must have made himself already notable to have been preferred to an office which, since the abolition of the stadtholdership, was the most onerous in the State.[2]

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[1] The States of Holland had been in recess when Pauw fell ill, and were to meet again on February 18. De Witt was detained in Dordrecht beyond the date of the meeting; and as, in Pauw's absence, it fell to him, if present, to conduct the business of the States, the "well-affected" in the Hague so manœuvred as to delay the meeting of the States till his arrival, despite the instances of those who had ends of their own in view. On the forenoon of February 21 the States of Holland met, and De Witt discharged the functions of Grand Pensionary. In the afternoon Pauw died, and next day De Witt continued in his function, the Assembly adjourning till after Pauw's funeral.

[2] In the MS. Letters of Resident Brasset, the French representative at the Hague, to M. le Comte de Brienne, which are preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, it does not appear that De Witt was well known at this time outside his own immediate circle of friends. On February 27, 165⅔, after a panegyric on the recently deceased Adrian Pauw, Brasset thus writes: "Il faudra maintenant voir sur qui tombera la choix pour remplir la charge vacante de Pensionnaire de Hollande, et bienque l'on ne doute point que ceux de sa faction qui sont notoirem^t^ les plus fors ny en mettre un a leur mode, il est neantmoin a considerer quil ny en a aucun d'approchant ny de la force du defunct ny de son credit parmi la plupart des villes, ce qui le rendoit grandem^t^ auctorisé et hardy de pousser avec chaleur les choses quil entreprenoit. . . . Le pensionnaire de Dort a qui il touche de faire la charge pendant l'interim est un jeun homme tenu pour formé sur le moutle (*sic*) du defunct. Je nay pas laissé de le voir," etc.

Chapter XI.

TROMP TAKES DOWN HIS BROOM. — THE CLANDESTINE NEGOTIATION.

A disaster, modified solely by the genius and splendid skill of Tromp, now befell the fleet in the three days' fight of February $\frac{18}{28}$ and $\frac{\text{February } 19}{\text{March } 1}$ and $\frac{\text{February } 20}{\text{March } 2}$, beginning off Portland and ending off Beachy Head, which compelled the old hero at last to take down his broom. Since the great victory of December, his ships had not been replenished with ammunition and stores.[1] He appears to have believed that the admiralties had put all requisites on board. Inquiries into the circumstance by a committee of the States-General were afterward made; but the facts were smothered beneath official contradictions and disbelief. There was no power in the country, split up into home-rule fragments, and buried under formula, privilege, and red-tape routine, which was strong enough to visit such criminality with punishment. High mediocrity, buckramed all over in stiff casements of traditional privilege, was rampant everywhere; and, worst of all, it was intelligent mediocrity, believing in its own supreme capability to do the work of governing.

Tromp, in this condition as regards powder and shot, was returning, at the end of February, from the rendezvous ground off St. Martin, opposite Rochelle, having in convoy 150 merchantmen. England during the last few weeks had been putting forth its energies in the preparation of a new fleet of large and powerful ships, to wipe out the disgrace of December 10; and, Tromp's movements being known, it had been sent to sea, to waylay him on his homeward voyage through

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 161.

the Channel. To Blake were now joined Deane and Monk. On Friday morning, February 28, Blake was cruising off Portland, when the dense Dutch armada, crowding up over the horizon, came into view and covered the sea before him, 220 ships in all. The rich merchantmen were inclosed within four protecting squadrons; Tromp himself leading the van, and De Ruyter, Evertsen, and Florissen covering them on the other three sides. As soon as Tromp saw the enemy, the signal-gun which called his captains on board flashed from the side of his vessel. A council of war was held: the merchantmen were ordered to lie close in to the English coast, which gave them the advantage of the wind; and Evertsen spread out his squadron around them, as a line of defence during the heat of the battle. Then Tromp, calling his own crew before him, and, in that style of kindly, fatherly earnestness which had made him the hero and father of the fleet, spoke these rough words: "My children and dear comrades, we have a strong enemy before us, neither Spaniards nor Turks, but a race of Christians, worse than Turks. Therefore, my friends, look well to what you are about; take care that these wicked rogues and plunderers don't master you. Don't fire till you can give them a broadside." "We will fight like men," was the cry which answered him; and the old hero, singling out Blake, turned to his work.

He advanced in silence upon the English admiral without firing a shot, while the balls from the guns of Blake's ship, according to a Dutch pamphlet, flew over his head "like crows." Florissen pushed forward his covering line from the merchantmen, and seconded Tromp's attack on Blake's squadron. Evertsen's squadron charged into the mid-squadron of the English fleet, and De Ruyter's squadron struck upon the English rear.

Not a gun spoke from Tromp's vessel until he was within musket-shot distance of Blake, when, as he passed, he poured a broadside into the English admiral's ship; then, wheeling round and returning, he poured into it, on the same side, a second. Doubling once more, he again passed it, but this time on the other side, discharging into that side a broadside

also; and then the battle closed all round, ship to ship, squadron to squadron, in a wrestle of death.

The battle, which lasted three days, was one of desperate and heroic valor on both sides, and, when the Dutch had spent all their powder and shot, ended in the triumph of the English. On the third day, as Tromp wrote, speaking of his own ship, Evertsen's, and some others, if the English had persevered in the pursuit, he himself must have fallen into their hands, as his ammunition was quite exhausted.[1] On the other side, Blake was wounded in the thigh, and made lame for life. Tromp's splendid heroism was universally acknowledged, and he and his vice-admirals were honored with a special gift from the States-General, who had now to turn themselves to the restoration of their severely shattered fleet, leaving Blake, in the mean time, to threaten their coasts, as Tromp had threatened those of England.

Meanwhile the duplicates of the secret missive, intrusted by Pauw and the committee on secret correspondence to Stone on February 2, appear to have found their way into the hands of Lieutenant-Colonel Dolman, one of the committee's peace missionaries to London. One being addressed to the Master of the Ceremonies, and the other not being addressed to anybody in particular, seems to have induced Dolman to retain them in his possession, and write to the committee, or Pauw, that some alteration should be made in them in this respect; as umbrage might otherwise be taken by some members of the English government, seeing that England, like all other republics, was not free from jealous party-spirit, and abhorred "clandestine negotiations." Whether Dolman advised them to write direct to the Parliament is unknown; but his communication could have no other meaning. While the committee was still unresolved what course to pursue, Tromp's defeat occurred, and for a moment altered their plans. Grand Pensionary Pauw had died on February 21, a few days before

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. eerste stuk, p. 94. De Jonge points out that in the copy of Tromp's letter published in the *Hollandsch Mercurius* this confession was suppressed. The words are to be found in Tromp's original letter of March 4 to the States-General, preserved in the *Archives of the Hague*.

that defeat, and it must have been his successor, De Witt, who wrote to Dolman, desiring him to inform the committee of the effect of the three days' battle on the mind of the English Parliament, that the committee might deliberate on the alteration that should be made in the letter.[1] At the time that De Witt was writing to Dolman, Dolman had a letter on its way to the committee, which anticipated the query, and stated that all the talk in London was that an envoy was about to be sent to the Hague to invite the Dutch to treat of peace; that the moment for peace was now born; that peace was the intention and desire of all the most considerable men of the English government; but that the English government believed that the Dutch were averse to peace.[2] What the nature of Dolman's communications with his friends in London was, and what use he made of the secret letter he possessed to fortify his communications, we cannot know. The letter itself was never delivered.[3] But it is certain that the contents of his letters to the committee of the States of Holland impressed the committee with the belief that they should contribute whatever was in their power to strengthen the favorable disposition of the leading men of the English government toward peace.

Dolman's secret exhortations touching the impossibility of carrying on a "clandestine negotiation" gradually conducted the minds of De Witt and his friends to the bolder course of addressing the Parliament or the English government direct. On March 17 they were still in doubt what to do; by March 18 the doubt was dispelled; and De Witt, on that date, after putting the States of Holland under oath of secrecy, rehearsed to them the nature of the recent correspondence with Dolman; and, on behalf of the committee on secret correspondence, submitted for approval a letter, the object of which was

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[1] MS. De Witt to Beuningen, March 10, 1653.

[2] De Witt's *Brieven*, v. 93; De Witt to Beuningen, March 17. This letter, which is partly cipher, evidently gives only a portion of the contents of Dolman's communication; and a fuller statement of the contents appear to be given in the *Secret Resolution of the States of Holland* of the following day.

[3] De Witt's *Brieven*, v. p. 93 (March 17).

to remove the erroneous and "sinister impression" that the Dutch desired the continuance of the war, and to strengthen the inclination in England toward peace. The letter, which was not framed by De Witt,[1] was approved of by the States of Holland on the same day, the representatives of the corporate body of Leyden alone dissenting, on the ground that such a missive should not be sent without communication with the other Provinces.[2] A copy addressed to the Parliament, another to the Council of State, and a third without superscription, were sent to Dolman, with instructions to deliver the same in the manner most likely to gain the end desired. The messenger was a clerk of the late Grand Pensionary Pauw,[3] and it is unaccountable that he was not despatched till the 21st, three days after the letter was resolved on.[4]

While this letter was being concocted, and while, also, it was on its way to England, there were simultaneous deliberations and conflicting opinions in the English Parliament on the subject of peace and the despatch of an envoy to the States-General, the leading ground of opposition being the belief that the Dutch government had adopted the interests of Charles II. A three days' deliberation ended in an adjournment of the question for ten days; and on the morning that the subject was to be resumed, the clandestine missive of

[1] It was the work of Pensionary Ruyl, of Haarlem, and was read by him to the States of Holland. It is given in Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 804. *Secret Resolutions of Holland*, March 18, 1653.

[2] The Orange connections of the Pensionary have been explained in a previous note.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 804. The clerk's name being Borchloon. In De Witt's *Brieven*, v. 109, as printed (letter April 8, 1653, to Van Beuningen), Beverning, afterward ambassador to England, is spoken of as being then in London. The letter is probably misdated by the copyist. On the day before April 8, Beverning was in the Hague, taking part in the proceedings of the States of Holland. Mr. Van Sypesteyn, however (*Geschied. Bijdragen*, ii. 21), has inadvertently adopted the mistake. De Witt's first intimation to Van Beuningen of the despatch of the letter speaks of its being sent "by an express"—door een expressen (*Brieven*, v. p. 97)—language which, especially as the letter was partly in cipher, he would never employ regarding the Heer van Beverning.

[4] This is proved from De Witt's letter of March 24, to Van Beuningen, *Brieven*, v. 97: "De missive is . . . op vrydagh voorleden door een expressen . . . afgesonden."

March 18 was put into the hands of the Parliament, and read.[1]

De Witt's forecasting mind had told him, what was obvious enough, that a matter of this kind could not be kept secret beyond the delivery of the letter; and, while the opening of the clandestine negotiation was yet unknown beyond the States of Holland, he took power, on the eve of the breaking up of the States for the Easter recess, to communicate to the standing committee of the States of Holland (who managed the business of the province while the States were in recess) any letters received from England; if necessary, to have the States convened thereon; and, in the event of the Parliament writing, not to the States of Holland, but to the States-General, or in the event of the States-General otherwise obtaining knowledge of the clandestine negotiation, to make a round and full disclosure to them of the whole facts.[2]

The Parliament remitted the letter of Holland to the Council of State, that an answer to it might be framed, and a further communication prepared for the States-General themselves. The clandestine missive immediately became known throughout London; and, coming close on the rear of Blake's victory, was readily misinterpreted. An imperfect copy found its way into circulation, under the title of "Humble prayer of the States of Holland for peace;" and the Parliament accordingly deemed it necessary to publish a correct version of the letter.[3] From London the news of this negotiation passed into Holland, by the same post which brought information to De Witt that the missive of Holland had been read in the Parliament and remitted to the Council of State.

Further concealment was impossible, and the clandestine negotiation was made known by Holland to the States-General, where, De Witt says, the information was received with gladder countenances than he had expected.[4]

The two letters from the Parliament, one to the States of

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[1] In the beginning of April.

[2] *Secret Resolution of States of Holland*, April 4, 1653.

[3] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, March, 1653.

[4] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, April 14, 1653), v. 113.

Holland and one to the States-General, both dated April $\frac{1}{11}$, left London on the same day, by a ketch, which, after beating about against contrary winds for a week, reached Holland on the $\frac{8}{18}$th. The States of Holland, now in recess, were immediately convoked. A copy of the letter of the Parliament to the States-General was taken by the remaining six groups of provincial deputies, that they might send the same to their respective provinces, and obtain instructions thereon.

Such was the furthest outcome hitherto of home rule in Holland, a clandestine negotiation with a foreign power. From independent rule at home, the transition was easy, in their minds, to independent action abroad. Holland's clandestine negotiation was a virtual extinction of the union, seeing that what was lawful for Holland was lawful for each of the other six provinces. In this way it was opened to the Orange stadtholder of Friesland to adopt the cause of Charles II., and to Zealand to open a clandestine negotiation with France. Gelderland by-and-by discovered this, and advanced also from the doctrine of home rule to the dignity of opening, like a sovereign State, a negotiation with a foreign power; just as our own Ireland would do, in course of time, if its home-rule notions were humored. Meanwhile, the action of Holland subjected it to the indignation of the whole Orange party, and to the criticism of some of the other provinces at the meetings of the States-General. But the act could not be undone, and Holland made it plain to the other provinces that they must either, at enormous cost, strengthen their fleet and fight, or enter into a negotiation for peace when it was in their power.

The tenor of the Parliamentary communications was an offer to resume the old negotiation at the point where it had been broken off when Pauw was recalled from London in the previous July, without any change except what had been occasioned by the intervening war. Pauw, when all his proposals had been rejected, had in despair asked the Parliament to state what terms would give them satisfaction, and the Parliament had laid before him three preliminary articles, two of which were, payment of the costs to which England had been

subjected, and security that the two States would enter into an alliance. Here was a stumbling-block at the threshold of the negotiation; but De Witt, who never lost faith in the power of diplomacy, though downcast, was not daunted. While even Holland confessed that it was impossible to resume negotiations with England on the basis of the three preliminary stipulations presented to Pauw, De Witt was too fertile in expedients not to find some course by which the negotiation now opened should be kept at least alive. That was at this moment the supreme end before him; only to get the negotiation begun, and trust to divine diplomacy to resolve all the real difficulties afterward. It therefore would not do, from De Witt's stand-point, to reject the proposal of the Parliament because the Provinces could not treat on the basis offered; and it would not do to begin to debate with the Parliament, at the threshold, about that basis. De Witt saw this; and whatever he did see was invariably clearly and sharply seen. The first duty of himself and his friends was to conquer whatever scruples the Provinces entertained as to returning a favorable answer to the letter of the Parliament. His idea was that the States-General, without making the slightest allusion to the three stipulations, neither rejecting nor accepting them as a basis, should propose that a negotiation should be opened at a neutral place; and as he had now become a convert to a truce, under virtue of which commerce and trade could immediately resume their much-needed vivifying activity, that a truce should be agreed on during the negotiation. With those was combined, in his mind, the deep-laid object of sending the letter to the Parliament, not by an ordinary messenger, but by a person of standing in the United Provinces, ostensibly as a mark of respect to the Parliament, and to work out a truce.[1] The envoy thus to be sent would of necessity have been a Hollander, and one of the trustiest—a man without any scruples of conscience about opening another clandestine negotiation, if such were necessary, for carrying out Holland's designs. It is impossible to doubt that

[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, April 28, 1653), v. 116.

De Witt's chief object in desiring that a man of fitness and standing should be the bearer of the letter was, that he might have a trust-worthy instrument in England, who, if his public mission failed, would secretly and clandestinely, by all possible means, prevent the negotiation from being broken off. Four times, in the progress of this English treaty, we shall find De Witt violating the constitution by an actual clandestine negotiation, or by striving to prepare the means for such a negotiation, if required. This is already the second instance. He appears to have believed such a course the only method of avoiding the covert and hostile subterranean countermining of the internal enemies of Holland. Whether De Witt made this ulterior object of his known to his friends, who with himself were commissioned by the States of Holland to report to them on the answer that the States-General should be advised to return to the Parliament, does not appear. He was a man of supreme reticence. His colleagues in the committee neither approved of his idea of a truce nor of the transmission of the letter by a man of standing; and therefore all that came before the States of Holland was the proposal that the letter to the Parliament should suggest the opening of a negotiation at some neutral place, to be named by the Parliament itself. Neither the representatives of Leyden, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, nor Enckhuysen would sanction even that suggestion, without a previous reference to their respective municipal councils; and though the proposal of the committee was ultimately approved of by the whole towns forming the States of Holland, De Witt foresaw that hesitation, even in the States of Holland itself, would be seized as a pretext in the States-General for the deputations there appealing to their Provincial States for instructions. Zealand was still, with frantic vehemence, calling for an alliance with France. When Holland brought forward its opinion in the States-General, three of the provincial deputations fell back on their Provincial States; but Holland drove through a resolution, and the draft of a reply was agreed to by the remaining four provinces, viz., Holland and Utrecht, and even the Orange provinces of Friesland and Groningen, with their

Orange stadtholder.[1] The reply (dated April 30, and despatched May 2) expressed the desire of the Dutch government to contribute everything in its power to the conclusion of an enduring treaty of friendship, and, passing entirely by the preliminary stipulations, requested the Parliament to name some neutral place where the negotiation might be begun.[2] The same afternoon that De Witt was forcing this letter through the States-General, Oliver, in England, was dissolving the Long Parliament.

In concluding a question of this kind by a majority merely of the provinces, Holland was trampling down the provisions of the Union, by which no negotiation as to peace could be entered upon without the unanimous consent of the Provinces.

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[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, May 5, 1653), v. 122.

[2] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 806, where the text of the reply of the States-General is given.

BOOK V.

NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE.

Chapter I.

ENVOYS TO ENGLAND.

The diplomatic manœuvre by which De Witt attempted to turn the flank of the three preliminary stipulations availed him nothing, for the reply of the English government showed that the negotiation must proceed on that basis; and it also gave the States-General to understand that the negotiation for peace must take place at London. Holland's peace missionaries in London informed him, either truly or falsely, that Oliver stood on the three stipulations merely for form's sake; but whether this was so or not, these stipulations were there as the first difficulty which De Witt's diplomacy had to face. The States of Holland immediately appointed a committee to advise them what they should propose in the States-General. De Witt was in no doubt; and here again he wanted "one" fit person (without any quality as ambassador) to be sent to England to get this stumbling-block removed; to represent to Cromwell that no fruit could proceed from a negotiation on that basis; to sound him on his inclinations to resume the negotiation at the point to which Old Father Cats's embassy had brought it, when the collision of the fleets occurred; and, "by preparatory adjustment, to prepare the way" for a public embassy to London.[1] The committee and the States of Holland adopted his view; and the latter body, in order to come to a common understanding with Zealand, ordered conferences to be held with the representatives of that province in the Hague.

Now followed a long and troublesome contestation with Zealand. At the first meeting, De Witt's "one" fit person was increased to "two or three,"[2] as Zealand also wanted a

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[1] *Secret Resolutions of States of Holland*, May 24, 1653.

[2] Compare *Secret Resolutions of Holland* of May 24, 27, 1653.

representative in London as well as Holland; and these fit persons were not to be ambassadors, but merely pioneers of an embassy. Keeping in view that De Witt's "one man" would have been the tool of Holland, and, if De Witt could arrange it, the ready instrument or coadjutor of himself and of the truest friends of his party, he was thus about to be shorn of one-half of his power in the projected preliminary negotiation with England. With this addition to the number of pioneer-envoys, Zealand assented to the view of Holland; and it seemed for the moment as if all trouble from that side were overcome. But when Holland proposed, in the States-General, the despatch of these pioneers to London, the scheme ran a whole gauntlet of criticism from some of the other Provinces, of whom a number now took up Zealand's oft-repeated cry for an alliance with France. Such an alliance was the cardinal point of Zealand's policy, and it was a matter on which Holland was particularly lukewarm. Holland, however, by this time had been driven by Zealand, and its own diplomatic necessities in other respects, to assent to the long-pending negotiation for a commercial treaty with France being extended into one of alliance and guarantee; but it differed with Zealand as to the extent of the guarantee, and insisted on the ambassador being first recalled from Paris, to report orally on the subject. Zealand resisted this with fiery obstinacy, and was supported by most of the other Provinces. The reception in the States-General of Holland's scheme of sending pioneers to London, showed De Witt and his friends that a combination was forming which would obstruct all business and thwart Holland's movement for peace with England, until the question of the French alliance was settled.[1]

Holland, accordingly, turned to Zealand, and strove to come to some understanding with it upon this French difficulty. New conferences immediately followed, in which the common-sense of the situation was all on De Witt's side, and the obstinacy and infatuation all on Zealand's. Gradually, the Zealand deputies were beaten backward from position to position,

[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, June, 1653), v. 143.

contesting every inch of ground. First, they were driven from those clauses of their draft treaty providing for an offensive alliance with France against England, as implying a manifest contradiction; it being impossible, as De Witt argued, to treat with England for peace at the same time that they were negotiating with France for a joint war against it. Zealand's next position was to insist merely on the clauses providing for a league with France of defence, guarantee, and commerce—clauses which, in De Witt's opinion, were in many respects irreconcilable with a negotiation with England on the basis which the Dutch had in view. This basis of peace with England consisted of the thirty-six articles. Holland, in reply, offered an alternative, to the effect that the envoys to England should be instructed to endeavor to bring about a good understanding between the French and English governments, and, if possible, a triple alliance between them and the States-General; that, if peace was not obtained with England, the offensive alliance should then be entered into with France; and that, if peace was obtained, a defensive alliance only with France should be requested.[1] The difference between the two provinces was, that Zealand desired that the treaty with France should take precedence of the English negotiation; that that negotiation should be dependent on, and take its shape from, the character, whatever that might turn out to be, of the French alliance; while the desire of Holland was, that the projected peace with England should not be exposed to the risk of failure, or be even complicated and clogged, by its being tied to any foreign element.

Zealand's reply was a counter-proposal, repeating that the draft articles of alliance with France should be sent to the Dutch ambassador in Paris, with the articles of offence against England removed, in order that he might proceed to negotiate a treaty of friendship, defence, and mutual guarantee. Zealand also demanded that the Dutch government should bind itself by written act, to be delivered to France, not to conclude

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[1] *Secret Resolutions of Holland*, May 29, 1653; De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, June 2, 1653), v. 144.

with England unless France were included in the treaty. A reciprocal obligation was to be asked from France. Beaten, too, from that position, Zealand said it would be satisfied with an ordinary resolution of the State, instead of a formal written act, that the Dutch would carry on no negotiation with England except along with France; and that if England would not treat with France, then the Dutch should consider whether they should not treat with England alone. Beaten, also, from that, Zealand desired that the ministers to be sent to England should be instructed to make every possible exertion to obtain the inclusion of France in the projected treaty; and, if they failed, that the negotiation with England should then be suspended until further instructions from the States-General.

Every one of these positions of Zealand was sufficient to make a negotiation with England utterly impossible. It was impossible from the side of England—that is, looking to Oliver's present relations with the French government; and it was equally impossible from the side of the United Netherlands, because Holland would never succeed, or would succeed only with slow and herculean efforts, in inducing its confederate provinces to leave France out of the negotiation with England altogether. It would not only have to combat provincial opinionativeness, but also the covert intrigues of French ministers in the Hague, and the seditious complots of the Orange shiverers on the "asses' benches" impatiently waiting for a change of government. Besides, what of the war in the mean time, during a negotiation infinitely prolonged by difficulties of their own making? The full drift and effect, even of the last seemingly moderate demand of Zealand, did not escape De Witt's searching eye. Moreover, it happened that if the negotiation was to be taken up at the point where Cats's embassy left it, it had been already arranged that no ally should be comprehended in the treaty to whom either party might object.

One cannot acquit Zealand in this matter of stupidity, obstinacy, and blindness. Let us grant that she was trying to repair the breach with France which the peace of Münster had made; still, that was not the prime necessity in the pres-

ent condition of the Republic. Starvation and misery were filling the land; and starving multitudes were besieging the doors of the town-houses, crying for "bread or work." The whole industry of the land was stricken as with a paralytic stroke; the sound of its busy life was hushed, save in the sleepy dock-yards of the State. And then there was absolutely no principle in this war on the Dutch side—none for which any man could fight with a heart, or that would take possession of a man's soul, filling the rudest of us for a time with the glow of a divine purpose. The war had come upon them solely because they had toyed with the Stuart cause; and what inspiration had come out of that let the arrears of some of the Orange provinces themselves, and the lukewarmness in all high places, show. Only among the poor, starving multitude was there anything like a noble heroism seen. They thought that the war had something to do with their beloved House of Orange; and the same breath that called aloud for "bread," cried, also, "No peace! War to the death! No peace with England!"[1]

De Witt, and all the leading men of Holland, knew that the war had neither purpose nor principle in it. With the main end (namely, to get out of it) steadily before him, as a kind of beacon by which he steered, he was not decoyed by the whimsies—to give them no worse name—of Zealand. Holland firmly refused to hazard the English negotiation by tying it to the French one; but agreed, first, that the projected articles of alliance with France should be purged of all clauses which might contradict the English alliance, and be sent to the Dutch representative in Paris, with instructions to inform the government there what the articles had originally been, and why some of them had been removed; and, secondly, that if the English negotiation failed, the Dutch government was willing to restore the expunged clauses, and treat for an alliance with France on that basis.[2] With this Zealand had to

[1] Aitzema, iii. p. 825. Geheel Holland door was't meest also; hoe men berooyder, ellendigher ende armer wierdt, hoe de gemeynte meer riep, *Vive le Prince*, en "Geen vrede met Engelandt."

[2] *Secret Resolutions of Holland*, May 31, 1653.

be content. Holland then turned itself to private conferences with some of the other provinces, and once more to the States-General, renewing its old proposal for the sending of pioneer-envoys to England.

From this point De Witt had a succession of tedious struggles before him, mining his way, day after day, with patient, pertinacious constancy of purpose, onward through the viscous, gluey element in which he had to work, to the point of getting the envoys fairly on shipboard, and beyond the reach of further contumacy. In one, at least, of these struggles manifestations of temper were not wanting. Gelderland, in a top-valiant humor, while opposing the despatch of an embassy, was reminded by Holland (apparently by De Witt) that its quota to the general business of the Confederation was very trifling—five per cent.; that even this petty quota was greatly in arrear; and that were the terms of the union acted upon, it would be necessary to proceed against Gelderland "by way of execution." It is evident that here was a man with a very considerable governing genius in him, who could not, for the life of him, get leave to govern; being hampered on all sides of him by the doctrine of the free play of opinion among men who would neither fight nor treat for peace. That sole possible alternative was put before them even by Holland itself. Dearly as that province loved peace and prayed for it, yet, at the very moment when it was driving on this peace negotiation, it was also urging a war-budget, gigantic in those days, of £400,000 for the building of new ships and the vigorous prosecution of the war. The scheme was assented to, but suffered shipwreck by the intelligent governing mediocrities not paying the money.

It will be observed that throughout the struggles as to sending preliminary envoys to England, De Witt had been fighting for the despatch of a small number only. In this he was defeated; and when Friesland claimed the right of nominating an envoy to represent that province, Holland insisted on nominating on its own behalf two, that in any emergency it might always have one on the spot; and thus the number of pioneer-envoys came to be fixed at four!

De Witt's next struggle was to get them away out of the country, the interests involved being too vital to suffer delay. But as the question was entering on that stage of its development in which the States-General were to be urged to fix a day for their departure, another conflict (that of June $\frac{2}{12}$ and $\frac{3}{13}$) between the fleets, ending in the defeat of the Dutch, came to De Witt's aid as an inducement to quicken a pace which, it must be stated, was not slow, but was in fact rapid, when compared with the usual pace of the unmanageable government of the confederation.

The admiralties, at the date of the three days' battle of February, were in the act of equipping about forty ships; and of the vessels then brought back by Tromp, fifty, with a little repair, could be made fit again for sea.[1] While the five-headed body, during March and April, was supervising the repair and equipment of the ships, many of which would be sent to sea again with defective supplies of powder and shot, Vice-Admiral de With, with a small squadron, was despatched to intercept a fleet of English coal-vessels on their way from Newcastle to London. Presenting himself at the ship from which he intended to command the squadron under his charge, the crew refused to receive him on board; the present being the fifth or sixth time in his history that he had experienced such treatment. Compelled to turn to another ship, he underwent the same indignity; until the captain, inviting his men one by one into his cabin, persuaded them to receive him; but they consented only under a promise of amnesty for their conduct and a grant of three tuns of beer. The stormful, bearish man now turned three ships against the vessel which had first refused him admittance, and demanded leave from the States-General to open fire upon it. Some of the sailors were, instead, carried to Amsterdam to receive punishment; and the savage admiral, with his wrath unappeased, had to put forth to sea.

His attempt against the English coal-fleet failed. He had

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[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letters to Van Beuningen, March 10 and 24, and April 28, 1653), v. 89, 95, and 120.

met it off Scarborough, sixty in number, under care of a convoy nearly as strong in numbers as his own squadron; and he reported it so close under the guns of the castle that there was no opportunity of attacking it. Returning to the Netherlands, he wrote to the States-General in his furious, blustering style, but with fearless honesty of speech, that nearly all the eighteen ships he commanded were unfit for the work wanted of them.[1] The vice-admiral was to have blockaded the Thames —with eighteen ships!—in order to intercept this coal-fleet.[2] Could John de Witt be serious when he wrote this to Van Beuningen in Stockholm? or was he blowing the State trumpet somewhat loudly, that Van Beuningen might impress Queen Christina with the present might of the Dutch?

The crews of the sixty Newcastle colliers, escaping the Dutch fleet, went on their way southward, doubtless with light and cheerful hearts. When they reached the Thames they were seized by the English government and pressed on board thirty-two hired ships equipped for war, which could not be sent to sea for want of men, but which, with their complement of hands now complete, joined the main body of the English fleet.

The Dutch government, on its side short of men also, had forbidden the departure of any of the whale-fishing fleet; and even in the Holland town of Delft, where the magistracy was not infected with Orange principles, men could not be got unless they were enlisted in the name of the Prince of Orange as well as the States-General—another instance of the irrepressible Orange worship of the whole people—the prime fact in the Republic! The government was short of money also; the Rotterdam Admiralty was calling aloud for it, and could not obtain it. The English fleet had now been showing itself off the Dutch coasts. On May 13 it was off Zealand; on the 14th, when Tromp with his fleet, ignorant of the proximity of the English, was getting out of the Texel, it was sailing lei-

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 809; De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, April 14, 1653), v. p. 111.

[2] De Witt's *Brieven* (letters to Van Beuningen, April 14 and 28, 1653), v. 111, 120.

surely along the coast of Holland, capturing small Dutch hookers and making five or six hundred prisoners. A few miles off from it, in the Hague, the provincial sovereigns of Holland, in consternation, dreading a landing, and ordering garrisons up from various centres with the view of stationing them along the coast, sat on till two o'clock in the morning issuing the requisite instructions, and were at work again the same morning at eight. The English fleet dropped anchor on the ground where Tromp had lifted his a few hours before, and, with a parade of magnanimity, set their prisoners on shore. Tromp had gone northward, convoying two hundred merchantmen, some for the Baltic, and the rest to take a circuitous voyage round the north of Scotland, and thence down the west coast of Ireland to their various destinations, in Spain, the Mediterranean, and India. Blake, with a small squadron of twenty ships, was in the northern seas, having left Deane and Monk and Lawson to protect the southern coasts. He came within five miles of Tromp's great fleet, and either did not see it, or saw that he was immeasurably too weak to attack it; then he struck off, and pursued his course to the Scottish coast.[1] Mounted couriers were already riding day and night to the north to inform Blake that the Dutch fleet was again at sea. In due time both fleets returned, Tromp bringing with him a new body of merchantmen which he had met in the northern waters, homeward bound, by the same circuitous route from the mustering-station on the west coast of France. Then a few days were spent by the two fleets (Tromp's and the southern English fleet—Blake not having arrived) in searching for each other: Tromp, ninety-eight strong, penetrating into the Downs, capturing two or three merchantmen, and firing a few shots at the fortresses on shore; while Monk and Deane, one hundred and five strong, were seeking for Tromp off the Dutch anchoring-ground near the Texel. On June $\frac{2}{12}$ they met off Newport, and began a battle of two days' duration. At the beginning of the first day's battle, Deane was killed by a cannon-ball. On the morning of the second day, Tromp dis-

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 113.

covered that most of his ships were nearly destitute of powder, and it was resolved by him and his vice-admirals to make one brief effort to scatter the enemy, and, if that failed, to return to the Wielings. When that final effort was being made in the afternoon, Blake, who had been rushing for some days before a north-east wind,[1] with every inch of canvas spread, to join the fleet of Monk and Deane in time for the expected battle, crashed through the Dutch line into the thick of the conflict, and Tromp was driven into the havens of Zealand.[2]

Before Tromp went forth, in the first days of June, on an expedition which had ended thus calamitously for the Dutch, he complained to the government about the unsatisfactory character of the ships and the state of the fleet, and expressed fears of the result.[3] If Vice-Admiral de With, in his furious moments, blustered and exaggerated, Tromp never did so; and when a man of known moderation and temper, and, above all, standing in the very front rank of the world's naval heroes, spoke on a matter which concerned the condition of his ships, the enlightened mediocrities at the Hague, and in the various burgomasters' bureaus throughout the United Provinces, were in duty bound to pause and consider what this man—the wisest in sea matters in their republic—said. The enlightened mediocrities for the most part spoke Latin, spoke French, spoke German, and some of them Spanish, or Italian, or English; but they were men of mediocrity all the same. So, when Tromp complained, the intelligent mediocrities listened not; they had a theory of their own in their wise heads, and they cried, "Go to the Downs; do every possible injury to the English; intercept Bodley's squadron, which escaped from Galen's in the Mediterranean, and is now returning." Accordingly, Tromp went; did all that valor and genius could do for his father-land, and brought back his fleet, as we have seen, that intelligent mediocrity might consider its work.

We have said that he discovered, on the morning of the

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[1] See De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 115.

[2] *Memorials of Sir William Penn*, i. 491–500.

[3] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, ii. deel, eerste stuk, p. 113, '14. De Jonge states this on the authority of Tromp's own letters and remonstrances.

second day of the battle, that his fleet was again insufficiently provided with ammunition. Writing to the States-General on the morning of that day, when the "thundering of the cannon," as he names it, was beginning, he says: "This morning all the chief officers and captains of the fleet have come on board my ship, and the most part of them are so unprovided with ammunition that we cannot to-day hold out against the enemy for three hours; among others the Vice-Admiral de With has so little that he can shoot his supply away in three hours; the Commander De Ruyter has yet less; therefore I intend to attack the enemy once more to-day, but I shall thereafter be compelled to retreat within the Wielings, unless I, by my attack, can compel the enemy to retire. Your high-mightinesses [the States-General] will be pleased to employ all possible means for the strengthening of the fleet, and providing ammunition and other necessities."[1] On the following day, reporting, after his retreat, the result of this second day's engagement, he says: "I shall here," safe in the Wielings, "await a committee from the States-General and admiralties, etc., in order that ammunition and other necessities may be provided, and that the fleet, in all haste, may be again got ready; and that, after the fleet is considerably strengthened, resistance may be again offered to the enemy; because, by want of these, nothing but affront is to be expected by this State, humanly speaking, from the fleet which the enemy has at present in hand."[2]

This disaster, as has been already mentioned, occurred at the moment when John de Witt, on behalf of Holland, was pressing the States-General to fix a day for the departure of the four pioneer-envoys to England. Holland found it immediately necessary, on hearing of the defeat, to change its plans. The despatch of four pioneer-envoys, to ask if England was

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[1] Letter of Tromp to the States-General, June 13, 1653, eleven o'clock; given in Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 817.

[2] Tromp's letter to the States-General, June 14, 1653; given in Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 818. A third time Tromp repeated his statement of want of ammunition: see his *Relation*, handed to Committee of States-General at Flushing; given in Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 822.

willing to depart from the preliminary points, had from the beginning contradicted De Witt's common-sense; and after this catastrophe such an ostentatious embassy was doubly objectionable. Following close upon the heels of what all the surrounding nations, and what the mass of the Dutch people themselves, perceived, but what the Dutch government would not admit that it perceived, to be a great defeat, a body of four envoys, sent off in the face of the world, would be readily misconstrued by neighbors, and could bring nothing but disrepute upon the States; and if they returned with their object thwarted, the reputation of the States was damaged in proportion to the magnitude of the embassy. De Witt, therefore, returned to his scheme of sending off one pioneer-envoy only; but knowing that, if the proposal originated from Holland, it would rouse bitter suspicion, and be met with the most relentless opposition, he and his friends privily sounded some of the other provinces, and successfully instigated Gelderland, notwithstanding the recent taunt about "execution," to bring the suggestion forward in the States-General as an idea of its own.[1] Although apparently successful, it practically failed, for while one envoy, the Heer Van Beverning, was sent on in advance (departing June 21), he was followed by his three colleagues in less than a week afterward.

The single envoy in advance of his three colleagues was not allowed to depart without one more play of intrigue by De Witt and his friends to keep Friesland out of the embassy, if possible. Since the compromise with Zealand, on the question of the French alliance, that province and Holland held honestly together with reference to the negotiation with England. But Holland distrusted Friesland as much as Friesland suspected Holland; and the envoy nominated by the Orange province was necessarily a staunch adherent of the princely house. The advance-envoy, Hieronymus van Beverning, intimate friend of De Witt, and one of the trustiest of the small knot of trusty Hollanders, was secretly instructed to induce the envoy nominated by Zealand to accompany him to Eng-

[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, June 23, 1653), vi. 162.

land; in which event Holland would seek pretexts for delaying the departure of its own second ambassador in order to detain that of Friesland.[1] Though foiled in that, nevertheless in these diplomatic fencing-matches De Witt could more than hold his own.

At the same time, as part of the arrangement with Zealand, the instruction, amended by the elision of all clauses that would conflict with peace with England, was sent to the Dutch ambassador resident in Paris, that he might begin the negotiation of a French alliance.

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 820.

Chapter II.

STARVATION.—DE WITT APPOINTED GRAND PENSIONARY.

Once more, after the defeat of June, as after the defeat of March, a committee of the States-General went down to the fleet to inquire into the complaint of want of ammunition, and to consider how the fleet could be strengthened, and put on an equality with that of England. How it was to be strengthened was a point which Tromp had been dinning into the ears of the States-General for the greater part of twelve months. The experience derived from this war had told him that the professional war-ships of the State—not to speak of the still lighter merchant-ships hired and equipped for the war—were inferior in size to the English ships; that they all bore lighter guns and carried fewer men; and that, as ships of the size of the English ships of war could not be hired in the Netherlands, the remedy was to build heavier vessels, and to put all vigor into the work. But the governing capacity of six of the Provinces never earnestly comprehended this fact. In this, as in so many other respects, Holland, however, stood ahead of its confederates both in insight and energy. It induced the States-General to resolve to build sixty great ships of war, and some were actually commenced; but those which were begun stood upon the stocks, very little of the money voted being forth-coming.

Nevertheless, educated mediocrity, through the mouth of this official committee, once more put the question to Tromp and his fellow-commanders, What was to be done? and their answer was clear and emphatic. "There are more than fifty ships," they said, "in the English fleet, the least of which is better than the best Dutch ship; and there are thirty ships in the Dutch fleet which are not fit to be in the service of

the State."[1] Mediocrity itself could not now misunderstand that statement, illustrated as it was by two terrible defeats. Tromp, and certain of the chief men of the fleet, put it somewhat more plainly: "If the fleet, as at present composed, is again sent against the English, it incurs the apparent danger of instant ruin. Upward of half of the ships had, in the last battle, been almost more a burden than a help, the capable ships having been hindered by protecting them." Vice-Admiral De With, passionate and outspoken, declared shortly thereafter, in a meeting of the States of Holland, that there were only twenty good ships in the fleet; and he exclaimed, "Why should I be silent? I stand here before my sovereigns; I must speak out: the English are masters of us, and, consequently, masters of the sea."[2] Tromp and his vice-admirals (Evertsen, De With, and Florissen), along with Commander De Ruyter, also furnished to the committee a written statement, brief, sailor-like, and going directly to the point, of the defects of the fleet. Two of its four clauses ran as follows:

"First, the ships and cannon of our fleet are too light to withstand the enemy's ships; therefore this State has need of much heavier ships; likewise heavier cannon, and more men.

"There must likewise always be by the fleet at least two ammunition-ships, provided with from two to three hundred thousand pounds of powder, with a corresponding supply of balls, and all sorts of necessities."

Thus the fact slowly penetrated into heads highly educated and by no means dull. One stroke more, and the fact must go home: "Tromp and the other heads of the fleet unanimously declare that they cannot continue in the service of the State unless the fleet is provided with a large number of great and fast-sailing ships of war;"[3] and Commander De Ruyter asserted openly to the committee that "he will not again go to sea unless the fleet is strengthened with better ships."[4]

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 821; also De Jonge, II. i. 120.

[2] Ibid. iii. 829; and De Jonge, II. i. 120.

[3] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 821.

[4] Ibid; also De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, II. i. 120.

It is done: the admirals have struck work!

Consider the effect of this bold language and uncompromising attitude of the admirals on the officers and men of the fleet; first, in disseminating a mutinous spirit, and next, in discouraging them in presence of the foe. The States-General deemed it necessary to admonish the admirals to be cautious in the language they used.[1]

Yet one lesson more, which cannot fail to reach its mark: the English were blockading the coasts!

Great Tromp, most uncomplaining of men, had been jeered at in unmeasured terms by some of those heroes who footed it on shore, for complaining of the condition of his ships and their sorry equipment; and had been almost taunted with cowardice—he, as tough and grand a bit of human valor as ever led a fleet into action! And now, in a blockaded coast, came the natural commentary on his neglected warnings.

From the middle of June, throughout July, up to the beginning of August, the English lay off the island of Texel, with a broom displayed at their mast-heads, in imitation, perhaps in ironical parody, of Tromp.[2] The peasants and villagers fled in all directions into North Holland, from their huts and homesteads, in the expectation of a landing. Buoys were torn up and beacons removed, that none of the aids to navigation might be available to the English. Cannon were hurriedly ordered to the island by the States of Holland, to oppose the landing of troops or a passage of the enemy's fleet into the Zuyder Zee. Navigation and trade were everywhere stopped, excepting that a few coasters still ran along the channel between the mainland and the chain of islands which form a series of sandy bastions at the mouth of the Zuyder Zee, and carried on a little coasting trade with Hamburg. All the herring-smacks were lying idle—two thousand of them—crowding the havens of every fishing village. The whale-fishery had been forbidden; the Baltic trade was now entirely stopped; the Mediterranean and East India trade, during these

[1] Secret Minutes of the States-General, July 23, 1653; De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, II. i. p. 169.

[2] See *Onstelde Zee*, p. 124, and *Hollandsch Mercurius*, July, 1653.

seven weeks—the height of the trading season—was also suspended. The Zuyder Zee, says Aitzema, was crowded with ships; it was one forest of masts. Amsterdam itself, the emporium and sovereign city of the world's commerce, was becoming depopulated. Some estimated that 1500 houses were standing empty throughout the city;[1] others fixed the number at 3000, whereof 600 were rented at sums running from £30 to £210,[2] and it was believed that a continuation of the war would at least double the number. The "houses" of the poorer middle classes, and those of the classes immediately below them, were, according to the mode of living then, portioned out among three families, one occupying the attic, a second the cellars, and the third the floor between.[3] In one street Aitzema saw with his own eyes that every third or fourth house, attic or cellar, and every third or fourth warehouse or shop, were empty.[4] The grass was growing on the streets of the great and now silent city. Striking tales were told of men ruined by the dead pause in trade. A glove-maker, who, previous to the war, employed forty-eight workmen, was now a workman himself; and a manufacturer of bone-lace, formerly employing between three and four hundred girls, could now employ only three hands. So much has history recorded of the glove-maker and lace-manufacturer; but it remains silent about the forty-eight workmen and the three or four hundred girls, and the many like them. What was their fate? Oblivion now has wrapped its solemn mantle over them, from the hour when they returned downcast from their work, "no longer wanted." They disappeared, we suppose, into their "cellars" or "attics," to starve, and nurse sedition in their hearts against the usurping un-Orange government. "The land is choke-full of beggars," said the Admi-

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 876.

[2] Ibid. iii. 813. The numbers given in the text are the estimates of men contemporary with the war. Luzac, *Holland's Rijkdom*, I. iv. p. 150, adopts the larger number, and repeats it with emphasis. Ibid. v. p. 188.

[3] "Voorslach om in tydt van noodt een seer groote Somme," etc., by one of the burgomasters and the pensionary of Amsterdam, printed in Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 835.

[4] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 876.

ralty of Amsterdam.[1] Let us try to realize that fact, and by means of it to get a glimpse of the misery that is huddled out of the sight of history into the cellars of Amsterdam, and the towns, great and small, of the Republic.

With all these facts about it, it may be said that the educated governing mediocrity, which, especially in the six subordinate Provinces, clogged the energy of the really ablest and farthest seeing men in Holland, was, for the first time in the history of the war, fairly impressed with a sense of the duty incumbent upon it. Orders were sent by the States-General to the Admiralties, and to the patriotic agency named the Directors, to hasten on the equipment of the fleet, and to provide it to the full with every necessity; to put heavier cannon on board, and more men. Wages were raised throughout the fleet; inducements were offered to the inhabitants to serve; and beggars (the land choke-full), in accordance with a scheme elaborated by Amsterdam, were seized by resolution of the States-General, and forcibly put on board. Higher compensation was promised to the wounded; premiums were offered for valor; ships were to belong to those who captured them; the Admiralties were instructed to push on the building of thirty of the sixty great ships which the States-General had resolved to construct; and Keyser (then on the point of setting out anew to Denmark, to negotiate the treaty rescinding the recent treaty of redemption of the Sound toll) was instructed to accept an offer, of some months' standing, by the King of Denmark, for the exchange of heavy Danish ships for Dutch light ones.

Something like a faint glow of enthusiasm trembled for a brief space through the frame of the Republic. A number of people of birth and rank, both in Holland and Zealand, took their place on the fleet as volunteers, and provided at their own cost small bodies of men.[2] But there was neither hero in the Republic nor principle in the war to quicken and

[1] De Jonge's *Geschiedenis*, II. i. 170: "Het geheele land dat gansch vol van bedelaars was," is the language of the Admiralty, quoted from its Minutes for July, 1653.

[2] De Jonge, *Geschiedenis*, II. i. 172, 173.

fan the flame, to make the seven provincial organisms, for the time being, one sound, strong, undivided entity—to fire it with one heroic ardor, to fill it with one soul. It was not too late for supreme heroic efforts, if a stupidly invited war had the virtue in it of evoking martyrs and heroes. They were yet powerful enough to parry and fence with the enemy until they could throw their new fleet upon the waters, if they would only build it! Tromp told them that "it might have been built long ago if all had pulled together like one man, and done their best;"[1] which means if the provincial governments, every man of whom called himself a "patriot," had supplied the funds.

Even in the great emergency of this moment, though every one felt it, and theoretically confessed that a great effort must be made, the money was not forth-coming, except from Holland. Holland alone paid its quota; the rest remained more or less in arrear. Practically, to all intents and purposes, for whatever reasons, Holland was forsaken by its confederates; left alone, as it were, out of its single, almost unaided purse, to carry on the war. This should be remembered by Orange partisans in the Netherlands, to whom the truth of history is a light thing compared with the triumph of their own little principle. Posterity invariably revenges itself on historical falsehood and passion, and is constantly occupied in sponging out the errors of the bigot and writing the narrative anew, till it gets it written finally and once for all. We say that the doctrine of provincial sovereignty adopted by Holland was wrong, and had no basis of permanence in it; was an absurdity, in fact, if every province acted it out in the manner Holland sometimes did; but for its sister provinces, in the death-throes of a mighty crisis, with the enemy's fleet blockading the coasts, and English ships sounding the estuary of the Maas, to forsake it, as we have said, and to hamper every operation of State by leaving their quotas uncontributed, surely savors of a crime against the commonwealth. The intention of Hol-

[1] De Jonge, *Geschiedenis*, II. i. 172: "Dat men die had connen gereet hebben, als men maer als een man ider syn best hadde gedaen."

land at this time to fight lustily was beyond a doubt. On June 27, De Witt was writing, in a private letter, to his friend the pioneer-envoy Beverning, then at Westminster, "We are resolved to act vigorously, if necessary, with the fleet."[1]

One thing must be said on behalf of educated mediocrity, at this stage, at least, of its progress: The country was taxed to its utmost limit, and those who had money were in a state of panic. The evidence of the burgomaster and pensionary of Amsterdam, on a proposal that the States-General should borrow, at a valuation, all the gold and silver plate and ornaments in the Republic, and coin them, for the vigorous prosecution of the war, puts this beyond doubt.[2]

The Admiralties and the unpaid patriotic agency, the Directors, voluntarily aided with money by the town council of Amsterdam, seem, under the circumstances, to have done what was possible. They purchased two large ships, which were being built in Holland for the Genoese government, commanded the unwilling East India Company to make over, for the use of the State, two or three great sailing-ships, then loading, belonging to that Company; and sought out the largest ships which the commonwealth could furnish. Cannon of greater calibre were put upon the fleet; and there was now no complaint of deficiency of powder. But the cardinal defect could not be overcome: ships sufficiently heavy did not exist. Against the ponderous ships of the English, expressly built for war, they could still, after all their efforts, only oppose light trading-vessels, carrying comparatively few

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[1] MS. *Hague Archives.*

[2] This proposal is contained in the Voorslach already cited from Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. 834: "Alsoo tot subsistentie van den teghenwoordighen oorlog en excessive oncosten der selver, niet alleen seer groote, maer oock spoedige en gerede middelen van nooden zijn, en de selve by forme van nieuwe lichtinge niet alleen het Landt met een seer swaren Interest boven het ordinaris soude beswaren, maer oock selfs 't credijt grootelijck soude doen periclitteren, sonder echter soodanige sommen te bekomen als wel van nooden zijn, geconsidereert, dat alrede veel luyden niet alleen scrupuleus zijn, op't nieuws haer gelt aen 't Lant te belegghen, maer selfs haer oude obligatien met schade te coop dragen. Oock niet sonder groote druckinge ende perijckel van commotie by nieuwe middel van schattinge op de Gemeente, soude konnen worden gevonden."

guns and a small number of men, and these, such as they were, we leave them to equip.

Meanwhile, the poor, distracted community, refusing all such guidance as was offered it, and driving its strongest and ablest men into clandestine negotiations, understanding too well the discords which kept the Provinces pulling in conflicting directions, and which, at this juncture, had reduced all government into a process by which each party endeavored to outjuggle and outmanœuvre the other; and, seeing the misfortunes which had accumulated on a State which, but a year ago, stood at the head of the world's commerce, opened its mouth, throughout the length and breadth of the land, in the bitterest reflections on the government. Many impeached the good faith of the ruling party of Holland, and openly averred that all the disasters which had befallen the State had been brought about by the connivance and intention of that anti-Orange section of the oligarchy. The rude, natural instinct of all saw in the present order of things nothing but discord, the jarring and clashing of jurisdictions and sovereign rights, out of which no government could come; they wanted a hand that would tie the seven Provinces into a unity; they desired a "head," as they called it; and like one man the people began to cry again for the elevation of the Prince of Orange.

There had been another riot in the Hague, at the muster of the train-bands in May, whose heads, Aitzema says, were well muddled with French wine on the occasion, and the State colors had been shot to pieces a second time. It was followed by another riot in the same town, occasioned by the fiscal dispersing a children's procession, which had been got up to welcome the little Prince (our William) on his being brought back from Breda. The burghers of Dort, in the same month of May, had also demonstrated in favor of the Prince when the boat conveying him home on that occasion passed their town. All this proved that the feeling of the whole country was only slumbering. In midsummer, when the discontent had risen into frenzy, under the accumulated disasters, and under the effects of the terrible blockade, there were riots in Rotterdam, which required the guard to be doubled; also

at Delft, another town in South Holland, and in several North Holland towns. At Rotterdam, the drummer who enlisted seamen was not allowed to beat his drum unless he enlisted in the name of the Prince;[1] and at Delft a similar functionary was thrown into a canal because he did not use the Prince's name, and his drum was cut to pieces. The magistrates of Haarlem began to shrink from the extreme anti-Orange position of Holland, and talked of the necessity of yielding to the popular clamor by appointing the Prince. De Witt's personal influence with the pensionary of that town prevented them from taking that step.[2] At Ter Goes, in Zealand, a mob rose, marched to the town-house with colors flying, deposed the old anti-Orange magistracy, and displayed at the same time the Orange flag from the tower.[3] In other Zealand towns the example was in danger of being followed. The whole community of Zealand was fermenting with the idea; and the imbecile magistracy of the towns again thought of calling in the clergy to preach the chaos down, while they also resolved to insist, in the States-General, on the appointment of a captain-general.

De Witt beheld with desponding feelings the misery which prevailed among the poorer classes, and the fire of what he names "sedition," which was bursting out into fierce flame in all parts of the Union. Both in Zealand and Overyssel the sedition was general; it was around him, too, as we have shown, in nearly every Holland town. And now it was not merely the Orange worship with which the Holland faction had to cope, but also a new element which embittered it and imported a savage hatred into it—the suspicion that the anti-Orange faction had been conniving at these defeats, and intentionally betraying the father-land. It was a foolish idea, but it nevertheless existed, lending force to the energy, and vindictiveness to the fury, with which the hated faction was assailed. This new element gave De Witt grave concern, and

[1] MS. letter of July 3, 1653, from Cornelius de Witt to John. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. letters of De Witt to Beverning, July 11, 18, and 24, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. De Witt to Beverning, June 27. *Hague Archives.*

the remedies for it, he owned, were difficult to find.[1] From the misery, however, staring every man in the face, each day made it clearer that there was but one way of escape, and that was in peace. Fighting, according to him, was not the remedy. In truth, there was no salvation but in peace. No salvation for his party undoubtedly, but also no salvation for the father-land. In this matter, the interests of De Witt's party and of the general public were one. Both he and his party have been greatly censured for not prolonging the war, as if they had betrayed the public honor to keep themselves in power. The charge will not bear examination. The war had been carried on hitherto, for the most part, at the expense of Holland.

No moment for raising the cry for the elevation of the Prince of Orange could have been worse chosen than that when the English negotiation was beginning, and no cry could have been more dangerous to De Witt's party or to the project of peace. The proclamation of the Prince would be the death-blow, sooner or later, of the party; therefore the party withstood it to the utmost; while Puritan England would have regarded it as the adoption of the Stuart cause, and would have waged irreconcilable war till the one or the other nation was utterly prostrated. Either the all-essential peace was impossible, or the proclamation of the Prince was impossible; both could not be at the same time.

Private letters of De Witt belonging to this time, never intended for the public eye, show how earnestly he dreaded the elevation of the House of Orange, and how deeply he believed that the alternative now before the country was peace or ruin. Writing to his friend Newport, intimating that the latter had been appointed one of the pioneer-envoys to England, he says that "on the outfall of the negotiation the welfare or ruin of our whole dear father-land is laid."[2] In a letter to one of his uncles here marks that the elevation of the Prince "would make England irreconcilable, would strike the whole

[1] MS. De Witt to the Heer van Brederode, July 1, 1653 (*Hague Archives*); also MS. letter to his uncle, the Heer van Sypesteyn, July 10, 1653 (*Hague Archives*).

[2] MS. De Witt to Newport, June 10, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

land with the extreme of ruin, and drag all the inhabitants into miserable slavery" to the House of Orange.[1] In another letter, to his intimate friend Beverning (pioneer envoy), he thus, partly in cipher, pours out his heart:

"Our common dear father-land stands, in my opinion, at present in a greatly troubled and almost desperate state, as if it were besieged and taken. The outgoing fleet for the Baltic has been prevented from getting out for six weeks and more, and all other ships also (to the insufferable injury of the inhabitants) continue lying within our ports. From abroad we expect the costly, home-coming ships of the East India Company. Six of the Baltic traders have fallen into the hands of the English. We are also expecting a number of Mediterranean traders, and the silver-freighted ships, the war-ships of the Mediterranean Sea, and ships engaged in the French and Spanish trade, which are at present lying loaded, or on their way home. All these, we fear, with reason, will fall into the enemy's hands. Nobody is loading ships to go out; the herring-fishery stands still; rye and grain generally begin rapidly to rise in price; from all which it follows that thousands of men have neither work nor food, and accordingly turn themselves to wrong-doing, some to plundering and robbing, and others to calumnies and slanders. Of such sorts of men nearly all the towns of Holland are full; and as people always desire to lay the evil on some one, so all disasters are generally ascribed to the bad management of the government; and this appears to be so deeply rooted in the people's mind that no remedies are powerful enough to overcome the sickness. As usually happens, some are now striving to fish in troubled water, and to impress upon the community that one head is wanted for the State, or that everything will go worse. This idea has taken such hold of the public mind that there is scarcely the thousandth man of the common people who is free from it; and I expect daily that something will happen through which the State will be placed in extreme perplexity, and which will prevent what, to all appearance, is to be hoped for from your nobleness's negotiation in England. God grant that I may be deceived."[2]

It was in the midst of these circumstances, and while taking this despairing view of the condition of the country, that De Witt's provisional tenure of office was brought to an end, and he was elected Grand Pensionary of Holland, for the usual term of five years. It needed courage, and faith in his

[1] MS. letter to the Heer van Corput, July 10, 1653. *Hague Archives.*
[2] MS. letter to Beverning, July 11, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

political creed, to accept the office at such an hour. He knew well the work before him, the danger that surrounded him, and the hatred it would bring him. Already his family had been identified in the popular mind with the opposition to the House of Orange: the "Louvesteyn gentlemen" was now a by-word. Little more than a month before he was asked to accept the office, his father had been assaulted by a ruffian, with the exclamation, "We will teach you to speak ill of the Prince of Orange!" Since then, his own brother Cornelius had been writing him from Rotterdam that neither he (John) nor father Jacob should ever venture out in the evening without servants, in the present temper of the community.[1] Verily the times were unsettled; but the modifying circumstance was, that though the election of the Prince of Orange as captain-general was shouted for from every throat, and called for by Holland's six confederates in a breath, the Prince was but a child, and Holland's chief minister, however strong a man he might be, did not need to fear the scaffold of Oldenbarneveldt, or the prison of Grotius, or the six deputies. De Witt, after consulting with his friends in Dordrecht, did not shrink from the position—"A thankless office," said one friend, congratulating him;[2] "Gilded slavery," said another[3]—and he was sworn into office on July 30, 1653.[4] Remembering Oldenbarneveldt and Grotius, he asked, and obtained, from the States of Holland an act of indemnity for his future conduct before accepting office.[5]

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[1] MS. letters of Cornelius to John, June 10 and July 17, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. letter to De Witt, from his cousin Andreas van der Corput, of November 13, 1653.

[3] MS. letter to De Witt, from his uncle Van Sypesteyn, August 23, 1653.

[4] "Vaderlandsche Letteroeffningen." *Historische Bijdragen*, March, 1869, p. 119.

[5] De Witt (*Brieven*, v. 180) thus announces his acceptance of the office to his friend Van Beuningen in Stockholm, August 5, 1653: "Ende hebbe ick volgens 't selve myn schryven met den Borgermeester ende Regeerders der Stadt Dordrecht, alsmede met myne Bloedtvrienden geconsulteert over de bekommerlycke charge daertoe 't haer Ed. Groot Mog. belieft heeft my te beroepen, ende hebben deselve my geanimeert, omme onaengesien de swaerigheden van de tyden den selven last op my te nemen, ten welcken eynde Borgermeester 'nde Regeerders voornoemt my voor den tydt van vyf jaeren hebben gedispenseert van den eedt ende plight, daer mede ick als Pensionaris aen de stadt van Dordrecht voorsz. verbonden was. Ick hebbe

It appears as if the Holland faction were now beginning to realize the fact that this young man was becoming indispensable to them. During the few days he was at Dordrecht, consulting with his friends and preparing for divesting himself of his pensionaryship of Dordrecht, the lord of Brederode (president of the nobles in the States of Holland) wrote to him to return immediately to the Hague, remarking: "The man who supplies your place is not wanting in good-will; but as for the rest, I leave that to you."[1] Enough: this was a plain admission that De Witt was rising prominently into view as the one man fit to be the general of the faction. The secret of this sudden recall was that the ordinary delegates of Zealand to the States-General had that same day moved the nomination of the little Prince as captain-general, and of Prince William, Stadtholder of Friesland, as his lieutenant during his minority; and the Holland faction were in want of all the brain-power their party contained.

De Witt flew to his post in the Hague. On August 2, the States of Holland, in unbroken phalanx, without the defection of a single town, not even of Leyden or Haarlem, the latter of which had been wavering,[2] passed a unanimous resolution opposing the nomination; ordering the preparation of a "deduction," or argument against it; and further declaring that, if the States-General, or any of the provinces, in imitation of the late Prince of Orange in 1650, attempted to ignore the States of Holland, and to appeal direct to the towns of Holland, these towns ought not to admit them to audience.[3] In a few days the "deduction" was circulated among the Provinces,[4] and the movement of Zealand instantaneously collapsed. Only low mutterings of the storm which it had evoked were heard

van de Heeren Staaten van Hollandt ende West-Vrieslandt niet anders versoght als alleenlyck een bondige Acte van indemniteyt te myner verseeckeringe end gerustheyt."

[1] MS. letter, Brederode to De Witt, of July 28, 1653. The person here referred to was named Kinkshot.

[2] De Witt appears to have been instrumental, to some extent, in overcoming the inclination of Haarlem for the elevation of the Prince. Sypesteyn's *Geschiedkundige Bijdragen*, eerste afl. p. 212.

[3] Resolutions of Holland, August 2, 1653.

[4] Ibid. August 7, 1653.

for some weeks in the Provinces around. There had been extraordinary delegates in Zealand ready to set out upon a moment's notice to support the proposal of their ordinary delegates, if there had been the least defection in the towns of Holland;[1] but Holland's front was impenetrable; the English peace was a necessity; the Orange party itself would split on the choice of a lieutenant;[2] and it was felt that the hour was not yet come for the triumph of the princely house.

Moreover, it was something in favor of Holland, though the victory was then gained, that the six towns of Zealand fell soon afterward into a bitter quarrel between themselves over the filling of the provincial offices. Two of the towns, robbed of their share of the provincial loaves and fishes by the other four, seceded from the Provincial States; which thus, for some weeks, became blotted out of existence, so that there was no recognized government in the Province. A stadtholder would have attempted to reconcile them, perhaps fruitlessly; still he would have attempted it. One sovereign mind in the Republic would, at the last pinch, have reduced them to order. But this republican hydra, left to itself where the weakest will not be bound, and cannot be compelled by the strongest, who can manage it?[3]

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[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, August 12, 1653), p. 191.

[2] See the opinion of the Princess Dowager of Orange (Amalia van Solms), on the Friesland stadtholder's pretensions to the office of lieutenant. Letter, De Witt to Beverning, July 24, 1653; Sypesteyn's *Geschiedkundige Bijdragen*, eerste afl. p. 213; and Thurloe's *State Papers*, i. 351.

[3] MS. letter, Resident Brasset to the Count de Brienne (Bib. Nat. Paris), July 31, 1653. Brassett, speaking of De Witt at the period of his permanent election to the office says: "C'est un jeune homme de 30 à 31 ans, qui a dès à present de belles qualités et qui nouries dans cet employ très important pourront le rendre, cy après, fort considerable. Ceux qui le tiennent d'un party contraire au leur ne laissent pas de l'avoir en estime et craignent seulement quil se laisse trop conduire par les mouvemens de son père tenu pour animé contre la maison d'Orange," etc.

Chapter III.

THE ENGLISH CONCEPTION OF COALITION.

Now, keeping our eye clearly on the fact that during this month of July the whole United Provinces were in an electric condition, that the population of even the Holland towns was in a state of insurrection, crying aloud for the election of the Prince, let us remember that all this was contemporaneous with the first month of the negotiation with England, and see what effect it had upon the result. Cromwell had his correspondents in the Low Countries, and knew both the deliberations of the Dutch government and the humor of the people.

The four pioneer envoys to England (describing themselves as "deputies") arrived toward the end of the interval between the dissolution of the Long Parliament and the summoning of the Barebones Parliament; and they began their negotiation with Cromwell and the Council of State, as the organ of the government at the time, making the briefest possible reference to the two preliminary points of reparation for past injury and security for the future good behavior of the Dutch, and merely indicating that a moment's examination of them would show that no "solid and durable confederation" could be established on such a foundation. They offered, in the negotiation which now began, to treat on the basis of the thirty-six articles which had been presented by Cats's embassy of the preceding year, and been partly deliberated upon before the collision of the fleets. The English Council of State, in reply ($\frac{\text{June } 29}{\text{July } 9}$), would not abate a jot of the demand to which the collision had given rise for reparation and security, and would not proceed to treat of peace at all until this preliminary demand was disposed of. On that point there was evident unanimity in the Council; but their minds do not ap-

pear to have been made up what the reparation and security should be. Cromwell was moderate in his ideas, compared with some of the members of the Council, and strove to soften to the envoys the rigor of the Council of State's reply. Early in the morning after that reply had been received (namely, $\frac{\text{June 30}}{\text{July 10}}$), a "gentleman of condition" called on one of the envoys, representing himself to have been sent by Cromwell, to say that the intention of the Council of State was not to insist on these precise demands; but that, in reference to the claim for satisfaction (seeing that the envoys had averred that the States-General never had any intention of quarrelling with England), it would be enough to visit Tromp with some disgrace, such as suspension from duty for five or six months, as the cause, either maliciously, thoughtlessly, or by accident, of the war; and, after a treaty to the satisfaction of both sides, Tromp's restoration to his old position would be winked at by the English government. Touching the demand for security, the requisite security was to be found in a close and binding treaty; and both parties would require to think of means which would contribute to the firm and friendly alliance of the two powers. Cromwell, according to this "gentleman of condition," thought that the security might be found in admitting into the government of each country two or three representatives from the other: the English representatives to have seats in the States-General, or in the Dutch Council of State; and the Dutch representatives to have seats in the English Council of State. These preliminary points being arranged, there would be no difficulty about the articles of the treaty proposed by Cats's embassy—the Dutch would even be permitted to fish in English waters, and to trade with the Caribbean Islands, and a truce would be immediately declared.[1]

The Dutch deputy thus intrusted with Cromwell's confidence was one of the two Hollanders, Newport by name. The Dutch coasts were still blockaded by the English fleet;

[1] See the official narrative of this conversation in the *Ambassadors' Verbael van haer Ho. Mog. Deputatie aen de Republyck van Engelandt*, p. 84.

and peace almost at any price had become a necessity for the Republic. Newport listened to the whisperings of the tempter within him, and fell, or pretended to fall: he held out the hope that even the great naval hero would be sacrificed if the English government would withdraw its blockading fleet and agree to a truce.[1] Alas! in a few weeks the brave, weather-beaten old sailor will be beyond honor or dishonor in this world, and the faction which would probably now have selfishly sacrificed him, if it had dared, will be among the foremost in laying him with imposing ceremonial in a national tomb.

In answer to the alleged suggestion of Cromwell about each power having representatives in the governing body of the other, Newport replied that the respective forms of government would not permit such delegates; but that some modification of the plan might be adopted, whereby each power should appoint two or three deputies for determining all differences as they arose.[2]

The faction was, luckily for its historical reputation, saved from the necessity of considering the question of sacrificing Tromp. Late on the following day (July $\frac{1}{11}$) the same "gentleman of condition" renewed his visit to Newport, and told him that he had just left Cromwell, who had been closeted for some time with two gentlemen, supposed to be Lambert and Harrison, and thereafter for several hours with the Coun-

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[1] Perhaps it is too strong to say that Newport fell. Perhaps he only *pretended* to hold out the hope that Tromp would be disgraced, with the objects of drawing out the whole proposal of Cromwell, of getting the English fleet away from the Dutch coasts, and of obtaining a foothold for negotiating. The words of the ambassadors are: "Hebben wy mede geoordeelt, dat by den Heere van Nieupoort wel considereert was, dat de Lieutenant-Admirael Tromp, het Hooft was van de Armade, van haer Hoogh Mogende ter Zee, ende onder deselve seer bemint ende van groot crediet, ende die nu van de Vloote af te nemen, dewyle de Engelsche maght voor de Zee-gaten van onsen Staat lagh, dat daer door de Vloote van haer Hoogh Mog. t'eenemal soude konnen gesteldt worden buyten postuer, in plaetse dat men die met alle vigeur wederom sogt te doen ageren; maer als de Raedt van Staate hier, haer Vloote van daer soude willen aftrecken, nae de kusten van haere Landen, ende vervolgens een stilstandt van wapenen accorderen, dat men dan daer toe eenige hoope soude konnen geven: ende nogh liever, indien de saecke ten principaelen konde werden gevonden, ende dat point dan gelycklyck met atsoen gearresteert." *Verbael*, p. 85.

[2] *Verbael*, p. 85.

cil of State, and that his views had undergone a complete change. Cromwell had said to him that the Council of State could find no security in a treaty with their high mightinesses, as the humors of many of the members of the Dutch government were hostile to the existing English government; and that only through necessity had they asked for a treaty, which they would merely keep until they had strengthened their fleet to the due pitch and entered into alliances prejudicial to England.[1]

The deputies did what in them lay to remove this distrust by inditing a long private epistle to Cromwell.[2]

Reparation for the past; security for the future: these, then, were the demands of the Council of State. For a full month the discussion ran upon the justice of the demands, involving the question, who was responsible for the war? a point, said Cromwell, into which he was ready to inquire, as it lay at the foundation of the whole negotiation.[3] At each turn the deputies thrust in the proposal to negotiate on the basis of the thirty-six articles put forward by Cats's embassy; going the length of suggesting, at last, that the two preliminary demands should be postponed till the main terms of the treaty were arranged. The Council of State at each turn replied obdurately by reiterating their demand for reparation and security, stating repeatedly, both in writing and through the mouth of Cromwell, that the satisfaction claimed for what had passed would be estimated at a moderate amount, as the reason for claiming it was not to extort money. Cromwell, in the speech already quoted, stated that its object was to justify the English government before the world; and he added, that if the responsibility of the war lay with the English, it would be the Dutch, and not the English, who were entitled to reparation.[4]

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[1] *Verbael*, p. 85, '6.

[2] Ibid. p. 29, where the text of this letter is given. The letter is dated July $\frac{5}{15}$, 1653.

[3] Summary, by the deputies, of a speech by Cromwell at a conference with the deputies, *Verbael*, p. 41.

[4] Summary above quoted, *Verbael*, p. 41.

In the same speech, Cromwell unfolded some of the reasons of the English government for demanding security for good behavior in the future. The official report of the deputies thus records his words: "Concerning security, he said that the English government was not ignorant how matters stood both within the Netherlands and with the powers around them; that the United Provinces had mighty neighbors, whom they could not trust implicitly; that there were spirits in their own country who now indeed pretended to seek an accommodation with England, but only with the intention of gaining time and of restoring matters, merely in order, within a brief period, perhaps within a single year, to overturn everything again, for reasons not unknown to the deputies themselves; that, therefore, their thoughts in the treaty about to be made ought to go beyond mere considerations of profit and worldly advantage; that God had wondrously delivered them out of the Spanish slavery, and revealed to them the truth of his Word; that the English, therefore, honored and loved them; but that people sometimes became careless, and did not sufficiently apprehend the intrigues which were used against them; that in England, God be thanked! the work was better understood than in the United Netherlands; and that, above all, what must be first thought of were the essential points tending to the preservation of freedom and the outspreading of the kingdom of Christ; not for themselves only, but also for posterity, in order that the treaty, built on such a foundation (yet according to the form and character of the respective governments), might be permanent and inviolable; that it had often happened that, after a quarrel, friendship became stronger and faster than before; and that neither of them knew what God the Lord, for the magnifying of his holy name, and the delivery of so many oppressed nations, who now more than ever groaned under insufferable tyranny, might intend to accomplish by the two republics in his own good time."[1]

It will be seen from this that it was Oliver's own England

[1] *Verbael*, p. 42. This speech was delivered on July $\frac{18}{28}$, 1653.

that must be made safe first; then, such being done, he would strive to establish a great Protestant alliance for the defence of Protestant interests throughout Europe, and the Dutch were the first whom he invited to join in it. Such was Oliver's conception of the peace that should be made. How vastly different from the conception of the Dutch! While his thoughts ran, in his own language, on "the extension of the kingdom of Christ," those of the Dutch ran on the extension of their commerce—views between which there lay at that time a radical difference.

On the day following that on which Cromwell made the speech from which we have quoted, two of the Dutch deputies met him walking in St. James's Park, and resumed the subject with him. From the conversation they got a further glimpse into Cromwell's views, and, this time, on the effect the alliance he aimed at would have on their beloved commerce. He declared that "he heartily wished that a good and durable peace could be established, because he knew well what management the Papists everywhere employed to attain their object, and how important to all honorable people was the preservation of the true religion and their freedom."[1] He added that, "on these two things, before all others, the two nations required to think. In his opinion, one of the greatest reasons of the dissatisfaction of the English nation, in general, arose from this, that the Dutch had overreached them everywhere in commerce. Their industry was not to be begrudged the Dutch; but, during the domestic troubles in England, the Dutch had done great injury to the English by all sorts of alliances"[2]—*e. g.*, that with Denmark, which fixed a minimum scale of Sound dues to be paid by English traders to the Baltic. "The interests of both nations consisted in the welfare of commerce and navigation, and no lasting peace could be established between them unless binding rules were made. He knew well that the industry of the Dutch ought not to be prevented; but that the English, having received so many advantages from nature in the way of good havens and geo-

[1] *Verbael*, p. 46.

[2] Ibid. p. 46.

graphical situation, could not be deprived of them. The world was wide enough for both; and if the two peoples could only thoroughly well understand each other, their countries would become the markets of the world; and they would dictate their will to Europe, and put everything, as regards commerce, on a good footing. . . . It would be necessary to adjust and regulate the common interests of commerce and navigation, if the two nations were to live in friendship and harmony;"[1] so that even the Navigation Act would be repealed, and there would be an end to a utilitarian trimming of the balance in the Baltic, if Oliver's conception of friendship could be worked out.

As yet Cromwell and the Council of State's idea of security had not been defined, and the deputies began to ask what security would satisfy them. This interrogatory sent Cromwell and the Council of State into close deliberation for several days, which resulted in the Council of State declaring to the deputies that it was willing to accept as security the union of "both states together in such manner as they may become one people and commonwealth, for the good of both;"[2] "Eo modo, quo ambo in unum populum, et rempublicam unam, pro utriusque commodo, coeant invicem et coalescant." On the Dutch side, the idea had all along been a "confederation," as they called it to humor England, but properly a close alliance —closer than they desired—of two independent and sovereign states; and now, from the English side, we have the counter-proposal of the absolute coalition and smelting of the two states into one—the making one republic of them—a union

[1] *Verbael*, p. 47.

[2] Ibid. pp. 53, '4. The date of the document containing this, the first formal proposal of a smelting of the two republics into one, is July $\frac{2}{3}\frac{1}{1}$, 1653. St. John's negotiation never reached this stage in express words. It is remarkable that in *The Case of Oliver St. John*, written by St. John after the Restoration, in answer to the accusations of his enemies, he does not say that the object of his embassy was to effect coalition. He says merely that its object was to bring about a more intimate union with the Dutch; but it was part of St. John's policy in writing this *Case* to understate, as far as he safely could, whatever told against him with the restored Stuarts. In the latest Dutch study on the negotiations preceding the outbreak of the war (published after the present volume was written), *De Zee Betwist*, by Dr. Tideman, the writer throws no new light on St. John's object, but proceeds on the hypothesis that coalition was aimed at.

closer, in fact, than existed between the Seven United Provinces themselves. The deputies pretended first not to understand, then to misunderstand, the proposal of the Council of State, and still continued to talk and write on the basis of a "confederation," *i. e.*, strictly, an alliance. This elicited a tart rejoinder from the Council of State, in which their conception of the union is somewhat more amply expressed. They said: "The Council did in express terms propound, not the establishing a league and union between two sovereign states and neighbors, but the making of two sovereign states one; which, although it did not necessitate the alteration of the municipal laws of either, yet it cannot but intend the whole, so united, to be under one supreme power, to consist of persons of both nations, according as shall be agreed upon, and to have and enjoy the like privileges and freedom in respect of habitations, possessions, trade, ports, fishing, and all other advantages whatsoever in each other's countries, as natives, without any difference or distinction."[1]

The deputies combated the idea of coalition strenuously on many grounds: that it had no parallel in history; that it would lead to untold confusion; that it was opposed to the principle on which the Seven Provinces were themselves confederated; and, finally, that it was impossible. They hinted that, if the Council persisted in the idea, they must return home. The Council replied that they had not put forward the idea of coalition as one which was to exclude the consideration and acceptance of other forms of security; they had "propounded it as that which, in their judgment, was most just and equal in itself; most honorable and profitable unto both; most easy and practicable in respect of the present difficulties; and, lastly, as the most likely means, by the blessing of God, to obviate and prevent the design of the enemies to the interest of Christ and his people in both the nations." Seeing, however, that the deputies disapproved of this form of security (the reply went on to say), the Council had expected them to state "by what other practical ways and means England was to be secured."[2]

[1] *Verbael*, p. 62.

[2] Ibid. p. 71.

In short, the negotiation had now reached a point at which it must be either broken off or reported to the States-General for further instructions. Up to this time, through De Witt's dexterity, the States-General had been kept in ignorance of all specific particulars regarding the negotiation. The official letters of the deputies were intentionally vague and general; none of the papers which had been interchanged with the Council of State had been sent home, and the States-General were not informed of the communications made by the "gentleman of condition" to Newport, or of the hint as to an amalgamation of the two republics.[1] Beverning, with De Witt's connivance, managed this in London; and it was De Witt's work in the Hague to allay the discontent and suspicion which were arising from the want of the official documents, and to prevent a resolution from being passed requiring transmission of the papers. He knew that the risks of the negotiation were multiplied beyond measure if the speculations and counterminings of men hostile to the peace were fed by too precise information; and he balked the adversaries of the faction by supplying them with generalities which could not be converted into a means of injury.

All along, also, he had been in close correspondence with both of the deputies representing Holland (especially with the more trusted of them, his friend and confidant, Beverning), and they were made to understand well that under no circumstances ought the negotiation to be closed. Better (wrote De Witt, a full fortnight before the first formal proposal of amalgamation) to send two of the four deputies back to the Hague, to report the views of the English government; while the other two remained in London, to await the resolution of the States-General, and to keep the negotiation open.[2] It would then be De Witt's duty in the Hague so to manage men there that the resolution should express the wishes of Holland. Two of the deputies were accordingly sent to the Hague to report. They left London on August 14, with the rumors flying around them of another great English victory at sea.

[1] MS. letter, De Witt to Beverning and Newport, July 18, 1653. *Hague Archives.*
[2] Ibid.

Chapter IV.

TROMP'S LAST BATTLE, AND DEATH.

It was the battle of $\frac{\text{July 29,}}{\text{August 8,}}$ and of $\frac{\text{July 31,}}{\text{August 10,}}$ 1653, the last of the war, and sacred to history as that in which Tromp lost his life. He died, as he had lived since his boyhood, amidst the roar of cannon. Born in 1597, he was now fifty-six years of age, and, like Vice-Admiral de With, he had first seen the light in the little town of Brill. His frail old mother had been a widow for nearly half a century, and she went on board the *Brederode* with him to give him what turned out to be her last blessing and farewell. His father—a captain of one of the vessels of the State—had lost his life in battle off Gibraltar. The little Martin—then nine years of age—had been taken by his father on the fatal voyage. When the battle began, the boy had been put into the cabin for safety; but he burst from his confinement, and rushed on deck in time to see his father fall. Throwing himself upon the bleeding body, and covering the pale face with kisses, the child appealed to the sailors to avenge his father's death. He was now, however, about to set out on his own last expedition. His poor and tottering mother, when she had bade him farewell, turned to the sailors and begged of them never to abandon her son to the enemy, and to fight with courage. They answered with a cheer for Father Tromp—he always addressed his sailors as "my children," and they always lovingly called him "Father" —and declared they would rather blow up their ship than surrender him to any foe.

The old hero went out of the Wielings, with his fleet of eighty-two vessels and some fire-ships, on the 3d or 4th of August. On the 7th he was off Scheveningen; on the 8th he sailed north-easterly, till he was opposite Alkmaar, in search

of Monk (Blake's wound keeping him at home), who had been blockading the coast of Holland for nearly two months. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 8th he heard that the English fleet was lying off the Texel, a little farther to the north, and within an hour he had sought it out. Having sighted it, as it were, he feigned a retreat, to decoy Monk from the Texel, that Vice-Admiral de With, who was lying behind it with twenty-seven ships of war, might get out.[1] The ruse was effectual. Monk pursued the retreating Dutch, and not till five o'clock in the afternoon did his foremost ships come up with the rearmost ships of Tromp.[2] Night parted them, after a hot collision between the rear and the van.

The sound of the guns or the news had reached the squadron at the Texel, and De With, the vice-admiral in command, gave immediate orders to get ready for sea. It was a wet night, and very dark, though the moon was full. All the buoys in the intricate passage had long since been lifted, lest the English ships, by means of them, should find their way within the sea-gates of the republic. The pilots now declared that they could not steer the fleet safely through the narrow channel without the buoys, and the indignant admiral ordered forty fishing-boats to be moored along the channel, each with a lantern or a torch, to guide the fleet through the shallows.[3] On reaching the open sea, he found the wind in his favor, and, by five o'clock in the afternoon of the 9th, he had joined Tromp, who was thus at the head of one hundred and nine ships of war. Tromp at once offered battle to Monk, who refused it, both fleets having enough to do, under a strong nor'-wester, and with "thick and dirty weather," to keep away from the shore.[4]

On the morning of the 10th—it was a Sunday—there was

[1] Letter of Tromp to the States-General, August 8, 1653, written on board the ship *Brederode*. Printed in the *Hollandsch Mercurius*, August, 1653, p. 73. This is the last letter Tromp wrote.

[2] Monk says he had advanced to meet the Dutch before Tromp tacked about. Tromp's apparent retreat, however, led Monk far away from the Texel. See Monk's own account of the battle, addressed to the Council of State $\frac{\text{July 31,}}{\text{August 10,}}$ in *Penn's Memorials*, i. 501.

[3] Pamphlet, *Onstelde Zee*.

[4] Monk's letter already cited.

fair weather and little wind, and at half-past six o'clock the battle began. Tromp had divided his fleet into five squadrons, and as his own vessel sailed into action, he was moving about his deck with a small telescope in his hand, spying all round him, never keeping one place, now fore now aft, encouraging his men above decks and below.[1] At seven o'clock, almost in the beginning of the fight, the fatal bullet came, and, striking him in his left breast, pierced his heart. He was then standing on the companion deck.[2] Raising his hand to his wounded breast, he exclaimed, as he fell, "Ah, me! I'm done for. Be of good courage," and he was carried into his cabin, amidst the cries of his men, "Our admiral! Our admiral is killed!" He died immediately. The hero's long warfare was closed.

The death of Tromp was made known to a few only of the chief officers of the fleet, and was kept concealed from the crews and men. All day the fleets were drifting north-easterly from the mouth of the Maas, in their dread struggle, along the coast of Holland. The sandy downs that dam back the sea were crowded with Hollanders, anxiously watching the conflict. Profiting by experience, the enlightened mediocrities at the Hague sent supplies of ammunition to the fleet, and probably were among the spectators who looked forth upon the battle from the sand-hills of Scheveningen.

By one o'clock the Dutch were giving way; and Monk could now count sixty only, out of the enemy's fleet of a hundred and nine. He thought they were retreating, under the pressure of the English fire. He did not know that twenty-four of the Dutch fleet had treacherously abandoned their companions, and fled from the battle. De With saw the "poltroons," as he named them, running away, and he fired upon them to bring them back to their duty. They only spread more sail.[3] De With himself was ultimately compel-

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[1] *Hollandsch Mercurius*, August, 1653, p. 74.

[2] Pamphlet, *De Doek tegen de Broek.* (Duncan Collection, 1653, vol. ii.)

[3] There was an inquiry into their conduct. Some escaped punishment, in consequence of the unfitness of their vessels for fighting; others were severely punished. De With's language, when reporting their conduct on the day after the bat-

led to seek safety in retreat; but he contested every inch of the sea back to the Texel. Monk's small intelligence-boats saw his ships the same night steering into the Texel harbor, between the rows of lanterned fishing-boats.[1] Early in the battle, De Ruyter and John Evertsen had to take refuge in the Goeree, their ships so battered that they could scarcely float.[2] For the Dutch, the battle was at once a defeat and a victory—a defeat, inasmuch as they had been terribly beaten, with heavy losses in ships and men; a victory, inasmuch as they had broken up the English blockade.

"If God Almighty had not been pleased," writes De Witt, "to deprive this State, by an unlucky shot, of a sea-hero whose like the world has not often seen, and possibly will not easily find again, we would, according to the information we have received as to the condition of the English fleet, have been able to say with truth that we had achieved a great advantage over the enemy; as we are informed that the English fleet, after having plundered the coasts of this State, which they held, as it were, besieged and invested, have abandoned it, so that we may boast with justice of having broken up the blockade, and thereby attained our chief object."[3]

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tle, was so strong that Grand Pensionary De Witt was commissioned by the States of Holland to admonish him not to use such language in future.

[1] Monk's letter. It appears that De With himself, and some of his vessels, did not enter the Texel till the following day.

[2] Letter, M. de Ruyter to the States of Holland, August 11, 1653.

[3] De Witt's *Brieven*, i. 2: De Witt to Boreel, ambassador in France, August 15, 1653.

Chapter V.

DE WITT BEGINS HOUSE-KEEPING.—TROMP'S SUCCESSOR.

The few weeks after De Witt's appointment as Grand Pensionary of Holland were spent in furnishing for himself a house, starting a carriage and pair, and in every respect assuming a proper official position. Hitherto, as Pensionary of Dordrecht, he had lived in the building in the Hague provided by the town of Dordrecht for the residence of its delegates to the States of Holland; but it was now necessary that he should provide himself with an independent residence. He commissioned one of his uncles to purchase a pair of horses for forty or fifty pounds — a sum, replied the uncle, which would purchase only common horses, whereas John should have noble and handsome animals.[1] His sister Joanna (Mrs. Van Beveren, of Swyndrecht) helpfully bought some furniture for him in Dordrecht; had it put safely into a river-boat and forwarded to the Hague, with specific instructions about it, and with an intimation that she would follow in a week's time to see that everything was in its place. She even sent or lent him a servant, Margaret (Griettin) by name, who, with John's man-servant, was to put all in order. Margaret was willing to act as cook till John could obtain a cook; but having her superstitions, she would not sleep meanwhile in the untenanted house, "as she hears it is haunted."[2]

In Joanna's own family circle death had been busy this summer. On July 8, her husband wrote to John that his youngest daughter had died the same morning;[3] and a week

[1] MS. various letters of August and September, 1653, to and from John. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. letter from Joanna to John, August 16, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. letter from the Heer van Swyndrecht to John, July, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

later he is again announcing that another little girl was gone; "So that God," he adds, touchingly, "has taken to himself the half of my children within two months."[1] Some weeks more, and sister Maria, also, lost a daughter, which had been born to her the same summer: "Your nobleness," she wrote to John, "can imagine how this unexpected and sudden loss afflicts me in the absence of my dearest husband. The Lord will stand by us."[2]

About this period also we come upon traces in his correspondence — shambling pieces of French verse addressed to him — connecting him with a bright little union, founded in the spring of 1652, of the choice spirits of the Hague, which passed under the fanciful name of the "Order of Joy," seemingly one of the means by which Brederode (of the Counts of Holland) dispensed his princely hospitality, and sunk himself head over ears in debt. Brederode's daughter, the Baroness de Slavata, was the grand-mistress of the Order; among its members was the poet Huygens, and its objects were various forms of social enjoyment — music, dancing, competitions in versifying, and a general chasing away of—

"Dame Mélancholie,
Qui ne fit jamais en sa vie,
Que des maux de cœur et de teste,
Et troubla mainte belle feste;"

and of

"Monsieur son cousin germain,
Autrement nommé le chagrin."[3]

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[1] MS. letter from the Heer van Swyndrecht to John, July 14, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. letter from Maria (Mrs. Hoeufft) to John, November 7, 1653. *Hague Archives*: "In absentie van myn alderliefste."

[3] *Vaderlandsche Letteroefeningen*, Nos. 9 and 10, 1869, where some interesting genealogical and antiquarian annotations, by the Jhr. C. A. van Sypesteyn, will be found, bearing on some of the leading members of this order. The Slavatas had left Bohemia, and come to the Netherlands, on the defeat of the Winter King; and Joachim, Baron of Slavata, had, in 1629, obtained command of a company in the army of the Republic. When Joachim died, his son Albrecht succeeded him, in 1641, and afterward married Amalia van Brederode, the lady named in the text. Mr. Sypesteyn points out that the mother of the great Wallenstein belonged to the Slavata family. The verses quoted in the text are from the diploma of the Order, granted to each member on his or her admission to it.

De Witt's personal, non-official history is so absolutely lost to us that a fact as trivial as this is forced into momentary historical importance, since it furnishes us with a hint by which we may ascertain his position in the social strata of his time.

In those days De Witt had more serious business in hand than writing rhyme to amuse Brederode's daughters. He had struck down, by the force of one single resolution of Holland, the re-aroused hopes of the Orange party; and he and Holland had now to find, as a successor to Tromp, a man under whom the fleet would fight, and yet of such political principles that it should not be under the command of a champion of the House of Orange. In the earlier years of the Spanish war, each of the maritime provinces had its own admiral or admirals; but when the war had run half its course, the command at sea had so far struggled toward unity that there were only two such heads at sea, one representing and commanding the contingent of Holland, and the other representing and commanding that of Zealand. By this time they were known as lieutenant-admirals, implying that they were vicegerents of the Prince of Orange, who, as admiral-general, had the right of appointing them. Prince Frederick Henry, by a subtle move, at last brought about unity of command at sea; and as Zealand, for a generation, ceased to insist on its right of having a lieutenant-admiral of equal rank with the officer who commanded the fleet of Holland, the command passed entirely into the hands of the lieutenant-admiral of the latter province.[1] Thus Tromp, while he commanded the fleets of the Republic, was, during all his great career, merely lieutenant-admiral of Holland. It should be repeated here, that this consolidation of the authority at sea under one head was the work of the House of Orange. So far, with their imperfect means, had the princes of the House got in their efforts to fuse these small, jealous, and mutually repellent populations into one people. In the second English war, as a contrast, we shall see the outcome of De Witt's principle: the

[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, i. 430; ii. (eerste stuk), 195.

unity thus slowly attained destroyed, six lieutenant-admirals instead of one, with such a nominal right of supreme command to one of them as the weak States-General could bestow, but had not the faintest vestige of power to enforce.[1] Six generals in a field at once, that was what it was coming to. Could Holland and De Witt's principle of "home rule" blaze into greater absurdity than that?

Tromp having been Holland's officer, Holland proceeded, without consulting its confederates, to look about for a successor. The next officer in rank was Vice-Admiral John Evertsen, a Zealander, and a champion of the House of Orange: two characteristics which rendered him unfit. Following Evertsen came our furious friend Vice-Admiral de With, whom the fleet would more cheerfully toss overboard than obey, and with whom the head officers themselves now refused to go to sea. After them came De Ruyter and Florissen, both commanders merely, and not yet of merit sufficient to entitle them to be lifted over the heads of Evertsen and De With. Animated, perhaps, by the example of England, whose admirals in this war — Blake, Deane, Monk — had been transferred from land-service, Holland fixed upon Jacob van Wassenaer, Baron of Obdam, a member of the nobles in the States of Holland, and colonel of a regiment of horse, who had seen service in the war against Spain, and was devoted to the maxims of Holland. He was a faithful man, doing his duty honestly to the best of his power, and of fair capacity—nothing more. After a month of entreaty by De Witt and the Holland faction, Obdam reluctantly accepted the office; but his quality in the first English war was never to be tested, as its operations were now practically at an end. Holland intimated the appointment to the States-General, and requested that he should be authorized to command the non-Holland portion of the fleet also. The other provinces, jealous of the encroachments of Holland, consented for a single expedition only; then, after a time, the authority was confirmed.[2]

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[1] De Jonge's *Zeewesen*, i. 431; ii. (tweede stuk), 103–105.

[2] Ibid. ii. (eerste stuk), 200.

The two remaining questions which were now lying most closely at De Witt's heart were the raising of money to strengthen the fleet, and the English negotiation. He strove throughout the rest of this year, by regular taxation or by voluntary contribution, to obtain funds. He tried the latter scheme for the third or fourth time, and for the third or fourth time failed. Promises he wrung out even of Holland with infinite difficulty; but with what result in money payment we do not know. A score of passages might be cited from his letters of this period expressing his anxiety on this head, which refute the accusation brought against him that, in not carrying on the English war, he failed in duty to his country.

Chapter VI.

CROMWELL'S SCHEME OF A GREAT PROTESTANT ALLIANCE.

Whoever were responsible in the English Council of State for the proposal of coalition, it was evident that they did not understand the life of the Dutch Republic. To the six Orange Provinces, coalition with the greatest enemy of their beloved House could be nothing but repulsive. As for Holland, where would its political fetich of the sovereign independence of the several Provinces be? Where would be the preponderating influence, amounting sometimes to semi-tyranny, which it wielded over its six confederates, if the two republics were amalgamated? Had a coalition of the two governments been attempted, every town in the Seven Provinces would have blazed forth into open insurrection; the Prince of Orange would have been proclaimed from every town-house by infuriated mobs; there would not even have been a civil war, for the faction in power would have been swept away before the first shock of the popular wrath. The first inevitable step that the new amalgamated government would have been compelled to take would have been the banishment of the House of Orange. But what government would have outlived the great day of the exodus of that House? an exodus that would have taken place amidst something more than a nation's tears. And even in exile, the House, as the supreme object of the people's love, pity, and yearning desire, would have been mightier than if it had remained to pull the strings of intrigue at home.

What could Puritan England have done with a coalition obtained on such terms as these? Great Oliver might have held the people down, and garrisoned the provinces with his terrible Puritan soldiers; but for the purpose of any high

policy in Europe, coalition would have been worse than useless; it would have paralyzed both England and the United Provinces.

De Witt saw at a glance that the proposal was a wild one, and that no peace could be arrived at by such a line of negotiation.[1] When the two deputies who had returned from England made their report to the States-General, it was immediately carried for instructions to the various provincial states, and thence, again, in due form, to the municipal corporations. The States of Holland referred it, for consideration and report, to their select committee on English business, at whose head De Witt stood. It was his function to call the committee together; but two reasons prevented him for upward of a fortnight. First, he was at his wit's end what to do; and, next, a victory at sea, or another change in the unstable English government might occur, and lead to a modification of the English demands.[2]

Neither victory nor change came; and De Witt sat looking anxiously ahead, and seeing no outlet before him. The two things which were clear to him were, that the proposal for coalition could not be listened to, and yet that the negotiation with England must not be broken off.

During this fortnight of dark uncertainty, the much-revolving man, writing to Van Beuningen, in Sweden, of the hopelessness of the English negotiation, cheered himself with the reflection that "it might be well to imitate the example of the fisher, who patiently perseveres in sitting with his fishing-rod over the water, in order that, when the chance comes, and the fish bites, he may instantly whisk it to land."[3] A recent Dutch essayist,[4] in quoting these words, justly regards them as the key to De Witt's method, and much of his character as a statesman. It is beyond doubt that in all the diplomatic troubles of the state, in his internal as well as in his foreign

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[1] MS. letter to Beverning, August 29, 1653 (*Hague Archives*); De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, August 26, 1653), v. 199.

[2] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter to Van Beuningen, September 2, 1653), v. 206.

[3] *Brieven*, v. p. 206, September 2, 1653.

[4] Knottenbelt, *Geschiedenis der Staatkunde van J. de Witt*, 1861, p. 58.

policy, the patient figure of the angler, pertinaciously feeling the water when hope seems gone, is an eminent characteristic of the man.

When the committee was at last convened, they framed the basis of a resolution, and De Witt submitted it to the States of Holland. As Amsterdam urged the recall of the two deputies who were still in London,[1] it was only by De Witt's dexterous management, aided by cipher letters from Beverning, that he succeeded in getting the resolution approved of even in the States of his own province.[2] It contained instructions to the London envoys to combat the proposal of amalgamation with every possible reason, and to renew the offer of the strictest conceivable alliance, reserving always the independence of the two governments. Then came provisions which were to meet the anticipated break-down of the negotiation and the prolongation of the war. The first provision —that, notwithstanding such offer of alliance to England, the friendship of other powers, and especially France, should be cultivated—was probably no longer a sop to the other provinces; for De Witt must have foreseen that, if the negotiation now failed, other powers would be dragged into the quarrel, and the area of the war extended. The second shows us what De Witt would have been if he had been a free, sovereign ruler, and had not been clogged and retarded at every step by the intractable, opinionative aristocracy that stood beneath him, both in clearness of vision, in elevation of purpose, and in purity of motive. His full dimensions we nowhere get; not that they were extremely large, but because

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[1] De Witt's *Brieven* (letter, De Witt to Beuningen, September 16, 1653), p. 213: "Ende souden haer daermede alle de Leden hebben geconformeert, indien de Heeren van Leyden, dewelcke copye versoghten, die van Amsterdam dewelcke urgeerden" (here the editor of these printed letters has omitted the following words and ciphers: "meest de 48, 17, 58, 41, 12, 8, 53, 27, 17, van Ew. Ed. en Heer van de Perre;" a most important omission, which I discovered on comparing the printed text with De Witt's autograph draft. The figures stand for "revocatie") "ende die van Ter Goude, dewelcke mede daer toe inclineerden, de finaele conclusie hadden konnen aensien."

[2] MS. De Witt to Beverning, September 12 and 19, 1653. *Hague Archives.* Resolutions of Holland, September 18, 1653.

he has constantly to sacrifice what his lucid mind tells him is the best thing to be done, that he may be able to accomplish even something. This second provision was, that, "particularly, with all possible vigor, the equipment of the fleet shall be hastened on, the building of new ships of war proceeded with, and liberal sums voted and paid for these two purposes." If De Witt, in the republic of the Low Countries, had, from the first, possessed the executive power which Cromwell wielded in England, a different account would now have to be rendered of the English war.

The next step was to persuade the other six provinces to adopt the resolution of Holland. For this purpose it was submitted in the States-General as the opinion of Holland; but five or six weeks elapsed before they could be drummed into action; and even then they only bestirred themselves under the influence of some remarkable events which had taken place in England.

The envoys who had been left behind in London were Van Beverning (De Witt's bosom friend) and the Zealand envoy, Van de Perre. They kept the States-General advised of what was passing in England; sent a spy all round the coast from Dover to Yarmouth, to report on the condition of the English fleet since the late engagement; and communicated the result to head-quarters in the Hague. Cromwell, too, on his side, had expert spies in Holland — eyes which had the means of looking into the most secret deliberations of the government of the Low Countries—and he knew as minutely as the envoys every turn of feeling which was there manifested. But the deputies, though they could no longer act officially in the matter of the coalition, pending the reference to the States-General, sought every opportunity of promoting their object unofficially. Their two colleagues had not been gone a couple of days when Beverning encountered Cromwell in St. James's Park, and had a long conversation with him on the meaning and scope of the amalgamation. Be it remembered that the coalition had not been of Cromwell's proposing; that he had surrendered his views in favor of those of the Council of State. Cromwell declared, in answer to ques-

tions, that the English government, under this coalition, had no design upon the sovereignty of the Netherlands, or any of the territory or towns of the Republic. He parried the inquiry whether there was anything more under it than the protection of their joint freedom and commerce; but hinted that they should have common friends and common enemies; that as yet the English government had entered into no treaties, and that those of the Dutch with other nations could not be so obligatory but that the welfare of the people must be regarded as the supreme law. On the offensive policy which was to be pursued under the bond, Oliver answered not a word; but broke out into a discourse on the commercial advantages which the union of the two peoples would confer on the Dutch. Being pressed on the question of the offensive policy, he said that some council or body must be devised which should manage the foreign relations of the union. But by far the most important point in the conversation was a statement, voluntarily renewed by Cromwell, that the proposed coalition was a mere offer from the English government; and that if the Dutch could not accept it, the Council of State would consider any alternative proposals laid in turn before them.[1]

Though the two deputies courted opportunities of further conversation with Cromwell, they had found none up to the time when a mediator (name not given), a trusty friend of both peoples, who had the means of private access to Cromwell, and had often talked over the negotiation with him, presented himself to them. The result of the interview was, that he became the medium of carrying to Cromwell a memoir, containing a number of questions as to the working of the projected new government. The memoir was returned to them, with Cromwell's answers, which they regarded as neither sufficiently clear nor decisive.[2] Thus matters stood when a second mediator (name also unknown) introduced himself to Van de Perre. Beverning describes him as "a personage who had great, and more than common, access to his ex-

[1] *Verbael* of the Envoys, p. 143–146.

[2] Ibid. p. 147–149.

cellency, and who was not connected with the government, but was deeply versed in the business of commerce." During this interval the Council of State had been studying the bearings of the coalition on English commerce, and obtaining opinions thereon from London merchants. This second mediator, after some interviews, submitted the heads of an arrangement which he would undertake to work out with the English government; he listened to the comments of the deputies thereon; then departed, and after some days returned, and reported the views of a number of the leading men of the Council of State, with whom he had conversed on the subject.[1] There matters again rested for a short time, when a third mediator presented himself, with a new basis of arrangement, agreeing in all material points with the last. He disclaimed, however, all knowledge of the preceding mediator, or the articles he had delivered; but asserted that the articles he himself submitted had been made known to Cromwell and the chief members of the Council. As the English government had made the last proposal, neither Oliver nor the Council could take any step without a compromise of official dignity; but they signified that if the deputies would open the way to a new conference by some diplomatic movement on their side, these articles would form the starting-point or basis of the negotiation.[2] The deputies could take no such official step, as they were awaiting orders from the Hague. By this time the resolution of Holland had been taken, and De Witt was awaiting the decision of Holland's slow-conceiving confederates. But the two London envoys, while withholding all details, or knowledge, of the articles from the States-General (it is probable that Beverning communicated them privately to De Witt), began to write in strong general terms that there was a growing disposition on the part of the English government for peace. Letter followed letter to this effect; at last, Van de Perre's son, with a special pass, signed by Cromwell's own hand,[3] was despatched with a further and stronger declaration to the same effect; and it was these representa-

[1] *Verbael of the Envoys*, 149–155. [2] Ibid. p. 155–159. [3] Ibid. p. 161.

tions that arrived to support De Witt in manipulating the other Provinces, and inducing them to bring forward their provincial opinions.

Putting the three documents together which came into the hands of the two deputies left in London, in this mysterious manner, we are able to form a conception of the magnificence and grandeur of Cromwell's foreign policy; for whether the peace was to rest on an absolute smelting, or on a mere friendly confederation of the governments, the end to be worked out was the same. The policy was one which, in the time of the Thirty Years' War, would have given a new history to the continent of Europe. The supreme object of it was now put by these documents more widely than had hitherto been done in any of the official documents which had passed between the deputies and the Council of State, or in any of the non-official conversations between the former and Cromwell. The end in view was a great Protestant alliance between all the Protestant powers of Europe, for the purpose of propagating the Gospel. Switzerland, the free towns of the Empire, the Protestant princes of Germany, Denmark, and Sweden were specially mentioned as contemplated members of the alliance. The first document stipulated that freedom of conscience was to be vindicated throughout Europe; the second document, in a similar spirit, provided that no alliance whatever should be made with any prince or state in Europe who maintained the Inquisition, constrained men's consciences, and depended wholly from the Pope, but that they should be declared enemies. In their comments on this stipulation, the deputies put in a plea for their neutrality and friendship with all nations, with a view to preserve their beloved commerce. Alas! the god which now stood on almost every altar in the province of Holland was this same god Commerce. So, in presence of this idolatry, Oliver had to abate a little of his great idea. Hence, the third document, while prohibiting alliances with governments which maintained the Inquisition, etc., dropped the clause that such governments should be declared enemies. With France an alliance was to be permitted; on condition, however, that French Protestants were to enjoy religious free-

dom unmolested. And, to crown the edifice, preachers and godly men were to be sent forth by the respective states "to all peoples and nations who would admit them," in order to teach the people and spread the Reformed faith.

Such was the soul of the projected alliance, as it can be read to this hour in the official narrative of the Dutch deputies. The rest of the stipulations regulated subordinate details. For instance, coalition was not insisted upon, as Oliver's end was to get the soul of a union, whether coalition or alliance, not its dead outward form. He wanted a common animating purpose. Under the proposed arrangement, eight commissioners, one half Dutch and one half English, were to reside in the Low Countries, and a similar number in England, with power to determine all differences that might arise, and with right of access to all the proceedings of the two States. A joint fleet of one hundred ships and a joint army were to be maintained. England's contingent of the stated minimum number of vessels was to be sixty. Oliver was even willing to make some notable sacrifices to effect his end. He was willing, on payment of a sum to be arranged, to abandon the trade with the East Indies in favor of the Dutch, and to recall all the English ships and all English residents in the East. It needs only to be remembered that the great struggle in those days was for the spice islands of the Archipelago, and that English connection with the continent of India was confined to one or two insignificant coast stations. He desired, however, a partition of territory in Brazil. A clause in the second document granted, as regards mutual commerce, such terms as implied the abolition of the Navigation Act; the third document, no doubt from an oversight, merely proposed to restore trade to the footing on which it stood before the outbreak of hostilities: an arrangement that would have left the Navigation Act in force. And, lastly, though in the first document (in which Cromwell's notes were probably penned before the death of the great Dutch admiral was known) it was stated that Tromp's insult to the English flag could not be excused, yet in each of the succeeding documents, written after the death of the hero had become known, it was grandly

stated that all the past acts of hostility should be, and should remain, absolutely forgotten.

The points to which objection was taken by the deputies were the points which gave to Oliver's noble idea its supreme character. When it came to be shorn of the disputed provisions, the Dutch confession of faith was there staring out of every feature of the project. It was the old offer; a mere treaty of commerce, and of mutual defence against the assailants of either power and against the disturbers of trade. There is something grand in the tenacity with which Oliver clung to the impossible hope of, under one name or another, establishing a living, brotherly union with the Dutch for the extension of Protestant influence in Europe. But he did not read the Dutch people correctly. He appears to have imagined that the devotion of the anti-Orange party to their principles amounted to a religion with them, for which they would suffer, and on which they would stake their all, with the uncompromising grandeur of the English Puritans. We can see better now than it was possible for him to see then, that, during the Eighty Years' War, much of the Dutch religion, as a vital faith, had blazed itself out. The generation had grown worldly in every fibre of it.

Nearly three months had elapsed since the two deputies had departed for the Hague, and Oliver had long since become impatient. With the arrival of each post from the Continent he sent courteous messages to the two who remained behind in London, inquiring if there was yet no answer from the States-General.[1] To the ambassador from the Swiss Evangelical cantons, who had been sent to London to offer mediation, Oliver declared, "with tears in his eyes, and invoking the name of God, that nothing had so grieved him as this war."[2] Oliver was eager, therefore, for peace. There were in London ambassadors from the French government; also from Condé, whose rebellion had driven him into the Spanish Netherlands, and into alliance and co-operation with Spain against France; from his coadjutors in Bordeaux, where the wars of the Fronde

[1] *Verbael*, p. 160.

[2] Ibid.

were passing through their last wild throes of dissolution before the persevering genius of Mazarin—"Time and I;" and from Portugal and Spain. They were all importuning Oliver, some merely for friendship; and others, like Condé and Bordeaux, for active help. Oliver had long before this fed the mongrel rebellion of Protestantism and Condéism in Bordeaux with Irish levies, and had sent accredited representatives to that town to treat on terms that would give him a footing and a party in France, if the French government should adopt the cause of the Stuarts. Every other negotiation was, however, now suspended until the States-General should say whether they would join hand in hand with Oliver to give historical shape to his high purposes. His great Protestant idea, that nearest to Oliver's heart, was to take precedence in his foreign policy.

The procrastination of the States-General began to fill the deputies with alarm. Five, if not six, of the provinces had been listening to the blandishments of Sir Marmaduke Langdale and Lieutenant-Colonel Middleton — Royalist refugees; and had consented to give them a large subsidy to create a diversion by stirring up new troubles for Oliver at home.[1] With ambassadors from every court, the two deputies in London knew that much longer delay would drive Oliver into alliances, hostile to the Dutch, with some of the powers who were begging for his friendship. The same dread filled the mind of De Witt in the Hague. Finally, the several provinces slowly sent in their opinions; they were all hostile to coalition. None proposed any alternative form of security. Gelderland, which could not pay its small quota of the cost of maintaining the fleet, was terribly warlike; it desired that a categorical "Yes" or "No" should be demanded from England in answer to the question whether it would give up the preliminary points; and, if the answer was in the negative, that the war should be resumed; that Scotland should be roused in favor of the Stuarts; and alliances entered into with France, with Brandenburg, and other states of the Empire.

[1] MS. letter, De Witt to Beverning, October 24, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

Groningen took a stronger view, advocating the recall of the two London deputies without further parley; the public adoption of Charles Stuart's cause; the throwing of troops and munitions of war into Ireland and Scotland; and various alliances. The others advocated the renewal of the old offer of strict friendship, and as close a union as had ever existed between sovereign states—meaning, however, a treaty of commerce and of mutual defence.[1] In this latter respect, therefore, most of the Provinces stood in agreement with Holland.

This being so, De Witt labored to induce the Provinces to adopt the terms of the opinion brought in by Holland; but he failed. The resolution he presented to the States-General bore that the deputies in England should be "written to:" doubtless a profound stroke of policy on his part; first, to cut down the number of deputies, with the view of leaving Holland more unfettered in the work to be attempted in England; and, next, to get rid of the noted Orangemen whom Friesland had put upon the embassy. The resolution which De Witt had to accept from the other provinces was, that the two deputies then in the Hague should return instantly to England, with instructions to themselves and their colleagues to renew the proposals of alliance. Their instruction was somewhat more general, but, as De Witt thought, more comprehensive, than his own proposal.[2] De Witt's stipulation in the "opinion" of Holland about vigorous preparations for carrying on the war, if necessary, disappeared.[3]

With this simple reiteration of their old instruction, the two deputies rejoined their colleagues in England on November 4.

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[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 858.

[2] De Witt's *Brieven* (De Witt to Van Beuningen in Stockholm, October 28, 1653), v. 244.

[3] MS. Resolution of States-General, October 21, 1653.

Chapter VII.

THE COALITION AND ITS SUBSTITUTE.

The English government had, in fact, prepared itself for the rejection of the offered coalition, and when the deputies resumed the negotiation with the old proposal of a defensive "union closer than had ever subsisted between nations," Cromwell immediately consented to treat with them on that footing.[1] This union, as the deputies defined it, was to bind both parties to defend each other's freedom and commerce, by land and sea, against every assailant, either with their whole might or with fixed contingents, as might be arranged.[2] They also professed the readiness of the States-General to enter into a great Protestant alliance, the object of which was to be the defence of Protestants against whoever should oppress them; and they also stipulated that France, in respect of its past services to Protestantism, and the liberty which the government of that country accorded to Protestants, should be admitted into the alliance.[3] As they stated their conception of the treaty, it was to be a coalition of interests throughout Europe, in every respect which did not encroach on the sovereign independence of the respective governments.[4] Beneath this guise of union, this "mutilated coalition," as Cromwell at once named it, lay three or four deep-reaching considerations, which explain the tenacity with which the deputies fought

[1] *Verbael*, p. 189. [2] Ibid. 168, 172, 194. [3] Ibid. 168, 173, 174.

[4] *Verbael*, p. 193. "Ende dat die pointen (sovereignty and government) geëximeert blyvende . . . dat wy wel te vreeden waeren, dat de Genegentheden Vriendtschappen ende Interessen van beyde Natien in dien deele soodanigh coalesceren moghten, dat sy malkanderen als Broeders souden aensien. . . . Wy . . . voorstelden dat wedersydts Ingesetenen ende Onderdaenen in alles ende over al in Europa souden gauderen van alle de reghten, vryheden, privilegien, immuniteyten . . . die de naturele Ingesetenen wedersydts genieten."

for the people of the two countries being placed on the footing of "brothers." If the Dutch obtained the fruits of coalition without the actual amalgamation of the governments, they would acquire all the commercial advantages of English subjects; the Act of Navigation, excluding their carrying ships from English havens, would naturally cease to operate; they would enjoy unmolested all the rights (of which England claimed the monopoly) of fishing in the British seas; there was an end to the striking of the flag, an end also to the visitation of their vessels; and an immunity from all taxes and customs in English havens to which Englishmen themselves were not subject. These were prizes worth fighting for. Had the deputies gained their point, England, notwithstanding the "union," and notwithstanding the Protestant alliance, would have walked off with the phraseology of friendship and the Netherlands with its substance.

Oliver's great forecasting mind, however, had anticipated in sharp and clear outlines all the consequences of the change from coalition to mere alliance. The negotiations were carried on at this time by a committee of the Council of State, presided over by Oliver himself, who acted as spokesman. The language of the deputies had at first been French; but as Oliver followed it with difficulty, the negotiation was afterward carried on in Latin, supplemented by English, which some of the deputies spoke indifferently—Cromwell, however, invariably addressing the deputies in his native tongue. He told them that fusion meant the complete equality of both peoples; that each should enjoy all the rights and privileges of the other; and that, had the Dutch accepted coalition, the two peoples would have become absolutely one, with no distinction of rights or privileges, except that each would retain its own form of administering justice, according to its own municipal laws;[1] but that a friendly alliance meant a friendly regulation, defining and separating what belonged to each with the view of preventing future quarrels. By fusion, the privileges of each became common to both; by alliance, they re-

[1] *Verbael*, pp. 191–193.

mained essentially distinct. We must begin, then, said Oliver, by defining what are the rights and privileges which each is to retain; and he added that the object of England was not to make a short-lived but a lasting peace and friendship.[1] The deputies wanted no such definition, at least no definition on those very points on which Oliver set much value — the right of fishing and the striking of the flag. These, accordingly, he now placed in the foreground of the negotiation. Were these adjusted, the work in hand would be greatly facilitated.[2]

The deputies fenced with Oliver throughout two conferences. They offered that whatever honor had been paid to the English flag in times past should be paid to it in the future; and they proposed that the honor which had been actually so paid should be settled by committees of naval officers of both countries. Oliver would not delegate this to any such commission, and thought the supreme governments of the two countries could settle this better than a joint committee of naval officers. On the question of the fishery, the deputies merely insisted that it should be deferred until the general subject of immunities was considered. The discussion was broken short by Oliver delivering to the deputies the draft of a treaty, containing twenty-seven articles, with a stipulation that he should be at liberty to alter or add to them.[3]

A number of these articles provided for a defensive alliance against any power that should disturb either State, and described various necessary details of the peace. Others, as a safeguard, provided that every attempt by rebels, or their sympathizers, to launch expeditions against England, or to assist rebels in England, should be prevented and punished, and that any one declared a rebel by the one commonwealth should be expelled by the other, if resident within its territory. On these there could be no such difference of opinion as would

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[1] *Verbael*, pp. 189, 191, 219.

[2] Ibid. p. 189. "Syn Excellencie . . . eyndelyck besluytende dat die pointen van de zee ende visscherye geadjusteert synde, het vordere werck seer souden faciliteren."

[3] Delivered to the deputies on November $\frac{18}{28}$. *Verbael*, p. 198.

endanger the negotiation. The articles which did, however, create difficulty were these:—1. That the Dutch should, in addition to their losses during the war, pay such further sum as might be agreed on, by way of reparation. 2. That neither the Prince of Orange nor any of his line should be appointed captain-general, admiral-general, or stadtholder, or governor of any town or castle, or commander of any ship; on the contrary, that any attempt so to appoint him should be suppressed by force, with the aid of England. 3. That the Dutch fleet passing and repassing through the "British seas" should be limited to a number to be fixed by the treaty, that number not to be exceeded, unless, after three months' notice, the consent of England should be obtained to the passing of a greater fleet. 4. That Dutch ships of war and merchantmen meeting "at sea" any of the ships of war of England should strike their flag and lower their top-sail until the English vessels were passed, and should submit to visitation, if required. And, 5. That for twenty-one years the Dutch should be permitted to fish on the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland on payment of an annual sum to be agreed on. Besides these stumbling-blocks in the way of the Dutch, a point had been expressly omitted from the articles, the inclusion of which was a matter of honor with their government. This was the comprehension of Denmark in the peace.

The deputies, in vigorous terms, objected to the five articles cited; and the third, which placed a limitation on the strength of the Dutch fleet, they denounced as one which would not have been demanded from slaves.[1] They required its instant withdrawal, threatening, if it was persisted in, to break off the negotiation. The others, even that relating to the exclusion of the Prince of Orange, though they demanded its recall, they were willing to debate.[2] In a conference, Cromwell remained firm, but promised to give a response in writing to the objections of the deputies.

By means of the management of De Witt and Beverning, the information relating to the negotiation which had been

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[1] *Verbael*, p. 229.

[2] Ibid. p. 216, $\frac{\text{November } 22,}{\text{December } 2,}$ 1653.

communicated to the States-General still continued to be meagre, and defective to an extreme degree. The deputies had forwarded none of the minutes which had passed between them and the English government, under the pretence that Cromwell had bound them to preserve the utmost secrecy. In like manner, the twenty-seven articles were not sent to the States-General, and the account of them given by the deputies to that body studiously omitted the two most critical demands of England—namely, the exclusion of the House of Orange and the limitation of the Dutch fleet.[1] It cannot be proved, but it cannot be doubted, that Beverning sent a copy of them secretly to De Witt; and it is probable the other deputies surreptitiously and privily communicated them also to their respective provinces. At all events, on the day that the letter of the deputies was received in the Hague, announcing in general terms the delivery of the twenty-seven articles, De Witt was able to write to a friend that "the negotiation was now desperate;"[2] and he visited the French ambassador to inform him of the same fact, having a French alliance in view, if it came to that.[3] Such was the impression of the moment. We have that brief glimpse of it; nothing more. By the following day he had found some consolation: "In my opinion we have obtained this desirable end: we now see the ground of the business, and what we are to expect from England, and one can take his measures accordingly."[4] Happily, yes, if vestry-mindedness and political bitterness permit.

Meanwhile, the great man himself had been bootlessly striving to do his work also in the Hague. A month before the negotiation became thus "desperate," a Dutch squadron had been caught in a storm,[5] which sent thirteen ships of war to the bottom, and stripped as many more of their masts and rig-

[1] Compare the articles, *Verbael*, pp. 198–214, with the letter of the deputies of December 5, 1653, p. 225, in *Verbael*.

[2] MS. De Witt, on December 10, communicating the letters of the deputies of December 5 (the first they had written since the receipt of the twenty-seven articles), writes to Brederode, "t'eenmael desperaet is."

[3] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 860.

[4] MS. De Witt to Van der Myle, December 11, 1653. *Hague Archives.*

[5] On November 9 and 10.

ging.[1] De Witt instantly wrote to the Admiralty at Rotterdam[2] for a report on the thirty ships which were being built, and privately entreated them to appeal to the States-General to begin the building of another fleet of thirty, which had been resolved upon in the previous July, as some of the representatives of Holland were averse to the building of the second thirty until the first were built and paid for. A similar confidential request was, on the same day, despatched to the Admiralty of Amsterdam;[3] it was followed in a few days by another, and in ten days more by a third.[4] He was almost the one man in the United Provinces who saw what was necessary to be done, who was striving with all his might, open and concealed, to get it done; and he could not get it done. Around him there were dull-headedness, perversity, obstinacy, and—something worse—the treachery of many Orangemen, who would rather have seen the country overwhelmed than the party of Holland triumph. These letters[5] of De Witt stand in the Hague Archives to this hour, as so much evidence that the only governing brain in the United Netherlands was faithfully trying to govern, and was baffled at every step.

On December 10 De Witt thought the peace "desperate;" on the 11th he had found the little consolation already alluded to; and, having marshalled the States of Holland into new fighting order, he next appeared before the States-General, and "made a long speech."[6] Of this speech the substance only, in a few brief sentences which we owe to Aitzema, has been preserved. A faithful version of it would have conducted us farther into De Witt's mind at this time than all the letters he has left. Aitzema reports him to have said that Holland was resolved to use vigorously every possible method of resistance, being of opinion that both domestic and foreign means should be employed more than had yet been done. The domestic

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 838.

[2] MS. De Witt to the Admiralty at Rotterdam, November 16. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. *Hague Archives.* [4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid. Letter of November 16 to the Admiralty of Rotterdam; November 16 and 21, and December 2, to the Admiralty of Amsterdam.

[6] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. 860. Compare Aitzema with the MS. Secret Resolutions of Holland and of the States-General of December 10 and 11.

means were the equipment of a strong fleet, for which both might and money enough existed if the Provinces only exerted themselves—("ay, there's the rub"); and to rouse them to their duty, serious admonitions were necessary. The foreign means were an alliance with France, Poland, and the Hanse Towns, and another embassy to Denmark, to induce King Frederick III. to consent to a junction of the Danish and Dutch fleets.

Be it remembered that Cromwell, irritated at the reception accorded to the Stuarts in France, was tampering with the Bordeaux rebels and with rebellious Condé; that he had republican agents at Bordeaux; that he had received embassies from that municipality, and from the Prince; and that the negotiation of Mazarin's ambassador in London was making no progress.

If the Dutch war with England was to continue, then Holland's long frustration of an alliance between the United Provinces and France must cease.

Observe, also, that at last the English ambassador to Sweden was on the point of setting out—Bulstrode Whitelocke, whose journal of his embassy still survives to us. Suppose that Whitelocke should succeed in drawing Sweden to the side of England, or in reviving the quarrel between the two northern Crowns, then De Witt would do well if he could post Poland as an ally by the side of Denmark. It is significant that in De Witt's scheme there is no hint of espousing the Stuart cause.

Even while De Witt was thus expounding the political combinations with which, if the States-General were driven to it, the war should be renewed, the face of the negotiation in England was again changing. The conferences which had been suspended for a fortnight by the proclamation of Oliver as Protector, and the changes in the government which that fact brought with it, were now gradually narrowing the points of difference. A new element of trouble, it is true, had been thrown in by Oliver: a demand that justice be done on the surviving perpetrators of the Amboyna "murder;"[1] and that

[1] The Dutch were anxious to have this odious word removed. See Secret Resolution of the States-General of February 19, 1654, printed in *Verbael*, p. 301.

commissioners be appointed, first, to frame rules for carrying on the East Indian trade; and, secondly, to examine and adjust the wrongs and injuries done by dispossessing the English of the islands of Polleroon and the port of Polloway in the East Indies, and also the wrongs committed in Greenland, Brazil, and elsewhere.[1] After some weeks' hard debating, all through December and the first two weeks of January, the deputies conceded this new claim, and obtained for the commissioners power to decide, also, on certain wrongs which their countrymen alleged they had suffered at the hands of the English. Cromwell entirely withdrew the demand for satisfaction or reparation for expenses incurred in consequence of the war; also the clauses which stipulated for a right of visitation of Dutch ships at sea,[2] and those for the renunciation of all treaties adverse to the one now being negotiated.[3] The clause stipulating for the striking of the Dutch flag in presence of an English ship of war had provided that this honor should be paid on the ships meeting "at sea"—an expression which Cromwell himself declared to mean "the narrow, or British seas,"[4] and the phraseology was limited accordingly, without such seas being strictly defined. The article on the fishery, which allowed the Dutch to fish for twenty-one years, on payment of a sum to be agreed on, Oliver would not yet part with. To him its virtue lay in the assertion it contained of the English right to the fishery; and a kindred inducement led him to cling to certain imperious expressions in other clauses which referred to the *dominium maris* claimed by England. But the official narrative by the deputies does not suggest that they would have broken off the negotiation on these grounds.

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[1] *Verbael*, p. 273. [2] Ibid. p. 271. [3] Ibid. p. 271.

[4] Ibid. p. 278: "Ende met eenen voortgaende tot het 15 artikel raekende het stryken van de Vlagge, etc., syn wederom gerepeteert alle de argumenten ende redenen, die in voorige Conferentien syn geallegeert geweest, ende wierdt ten uytersten by den Heer Generael daerin gepersisteert alleenlyck, dat hy die explicatie byvoeghde op haer laetste antwoorde, daer sonder eenige distinctie van de rencontres in zee gesprooken wordt, dat sy dat verstonden van de naeuwe zeën die de Britannische Zeën genoemt worden." But some discussion arose afterward. *Verbael*, p. 396.

Two crucial points thus remained: the inclusion of Denmark in the treaty, and the exclusion of the Prince of Orange from office. The diplomatic battle was fought round the former. The Dutch would not forsake Denmark, and declared several times that they would rather renew the war than abandon her. The Danish question contained two elements—first, compensation demanded by Cromwell for the twenty-two ships which the King had seized, and their cargoes; and, second, the comprehension of Denmark in the treaty, which was insisted on by the Dutch. The deputies proposed that the King should return the twenty-two ships, and pay what the cargoes had merely yielded at the time they had been sold. Oliver, on the other hand, claimed their full market value at the time of sale, as the same should be determined by the Court of Admiralty in London; and he had still certain wrongs remaining to adjust with Denmark, which had been partly considered when the Danish ambassador abruptly left England at the outbreak of the war. The deputies offered the guarantee of the States-General for any sum Denmark might be required to pay. Beverning suggested that the fixing of the amount of satisfaction should be left almost entirely to Cromwell himself; and by such moderating means this question ceased at present to give trouble. But Oliver refused to include Denmark in the treaty; the old grudges were still rankling in his mind. The deputies proposed that the States-General should act as mediators for the settlement of any old disputes. Neither argument nor persuasion would move Oliver to "include" Denmark in the treaty, and his furthest concession was, that, after the value of the ships and cargoes was paid by Denmark or guaranteed by the States-General, all acts of hostility against Denmark would cease, and the ambassadors of the King would be received as those of a friend, to resume the old negotiation. The Dutch deputies were equally immovable; and at last, on January 13, they shook the dust of London from their feet, and, without taking leave of Oliver,[1] departed for Gravesend, where an English ship of war lay to convey them to Holland.

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, 904. See also *Verbael*, p. 290.

Their departure moderated Oliver's view, and Lieutenant-Colonel Dolman, who had been instrumental in drawing Holland into the clandestine correspondence which opened the present negotiation, was despatched to Gravesend, where the deputies were detained, waiting for a favorable wind, with an article agreeing to receive, after restitution and satisfaction had been made, the Danish "King, with his countries and dominions, as a friend into the league and confederacy."[1] The deputies deliberated for a moment whether they should return to London to complete the formal extension of the articles; but they took their way to Holland to work out the final approval of them by the States-General, who as yet had not seen them, and who knew, only in the vaguest way, their contents.[2]

The closing acts of the negotiation imply that the envoys considered all points of difference settled.[3] Note this implication, which is remarkable, and signifies much. The question touching the exclusion of the Prince of Orange was, to all appearances, still unarranged; it was one which had been partly debated, but it had in a great measure been evaded by the deputies, on the plea that they had no authority to discuss that question, and that they must refer it to the States-General. The English government had offered to omit the offensive clause from the public treaty and insert it in a secret article;[4] and this was the last public proposal of the English government in reference to the Prince which the deputies had to carry with them to the Hague. They knew well that the States-General would never agree to such a clause; they

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[1] *Verbael*, p. 290.

[2] From MS. letter, M. de Bordeaux-Neufville to M. de Brienne, of February 9 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), it appears that Beverning was anxious to return to London, but that Jongestal would not go back. The writer says: "Il . . . tesmoigne grand déplaisir de ce que le sieur Jongstal ne voulut pas retourner à Londres pour signer les articles, lorsque le Lieutenant-Colonel" (Dolman) "leur porta une lettre de M. le Protecteur par laquelle il convenoit de ce qui regarde le Roy Dannemark. Il aprehende aussy que l'on ne soit pas ici satisfaict du serment auquel on engagera le Capitaine General que les provinces unies choisiront." Basnage, i. 334.

[3] *Verbael*, p. 290.

[4] Ibid. pp. 271, 279.

had discovered also that of all the clauses of the treaty this was the one from which Cromwell would not be moved. The fate of the negotiation, in short, depended from this clause more than from any other. Knowing this, then; knowing that either publicly or privately Cromwell would insist on this exclusion, how could they, on the day immediately preceding their departure, when they pressed the English commissioners to "comprehend" Denmark in the treaty, and when the commissioners would not "comprehend" it, appeal to these commissioners saying that the great work of the peace-making had been brought to the compass of "a single word," and that because the English would not yield this word the nations were again to be plunged into war? The explanation, without doubt, is that the exclusion of the Prince of Orange had been already secretly agreed upon by Cromwell and Beverning—the latter acting in conjunction with De Witt, not on behalf of the States-General, but of themselves and some of their friends in the province of Holland. And here, in this secret, clandestine arrangement which appears to have been entered into, we come upon one of the most bitterly-contested problems in the administration of De Witt.

Chapter VIII.

DE WITT'S CLANDESTINE NEGOTIATION WITH CROMWELL.

The precise time at which this secret arrangement came into being, the circumstances which gave rise to it, and the exact shape it had assumed when Beverning, in this month of January, 1654, sailed from Gravesend with his two colleagues, cannot be traced. The private and confidential letters of Beverning to De Witt, so far as they relate to this portion of the negotiation, do not exist,[1] having been either destroyed by De Witt or returned to Beverning, in compliance with the writer's request, lest their contents should fall into hostile Orange hands. But that such an arrangement or understanding with Cromwell existed, or was at least fully discussed before Beverning's return, the letters of the French ambassador, Bordeaux-Neufville, to the Count de Brienne, the channel through whom Bordeaux-Neufville communicated with Mazarin, place beyond a doubt. The question which naturally arises here is, Who originated, during the discussion of the treaty, the suggestion to exclude the Prince of Orange? Was the general stipulation that the States-General, as representing the whole confederation, should exclude him, a thought of Cromwell's, or was it a suggestion made to Cromwell by Beverning and De Witt, for their own party ends? Next, who was the author of the minor proposal that, if the States-General would not exclude the Prince, Holland alone should do it?

The question derives additional importance from what happened in the spring and summer of 1654. Months after the

[1] With the exception of six or seven rescued from oblivion, and printed in *Nijhoff's Bijdragen*, x. They throw no light on the clandestine part of the negotiation.

return of the deputies in January of the same year, and when the secret arrangement had perfected itself by receiving the formal sanction of the States of Holland, and had become publicly known, the indignation of the Orange party burst out in wild whirlwinds of unappeasable fury. Around De Witt, the mainspring of the arrangement, and chief functionary and most conspicuous official figure in Holland, the storm raged the most fiercely; but it licked up Van Beverning also, in its ample sweep. In the centre of it stood Holland's powerful minister, calm, self-possessed, inflexible, with Orange anathemas and defamatory accusations launched against him from all sides. The Orangemen raised the cry that the exclusion was De Witt's work, that he had instigated Cromwell to demand it, and that, but for De Witt's instigation, Cromwell would never have thought of it. Even if the cry was false, it was still a convenient cry for destroying the reputation of De Witt and the dominant party in Holland, and it was used accordingly. The belief entered into the heart of the populace, who hated every one who was not friendly to their beloved House; and the blot has stuck upon De Witt's reputation to this hour. The question for us here is, Was this accusation founded on truth?

If we follow the official protocols of the deputies, the development of the negotiation as to the exclusion is marked, up to their return in January, by three stages. First, Cromwell's original demand was for a public article in the treaty by which the States-General should exclude the Prince from office; secondly, this was modified under debate to an offer by Cromwell to accept a secret article from the States-General to the same effect; and, lastly, the latter proposal was still further modified into a willingness, on Cromwell's part, to accept an obligation to exclude the Prince by Holland alone.

But if we turn to the defence of its proceedings, which Holland was compelled afterward to publish, it appears that some "considerable persons" had informed the deputies that the English government would abandon the clause in the proposed treaty, provided the States-General would agree to a clause providing that any captain-general or stadtholder who

might be elected should swear to observe the treaty.[1] This proposal became known afterward as the "temperament," or modification, and it is to be observed that no trace of it is found in the official protocols before the return of the deputies in January. We must regard this as that half of the clandestine arrangement which affected the States-General, the other half being unquestionably the offer to accept a secret obligation from the province of Holland to exclude the Prince.

There cannot be any doubt that the first two of the three demands specified are of purely English origin.

Complete exclusion of the Prince, or the most absolute binding down of him, if elected to any high office, not to aid the Stuart cause, was part of the very essence of Cromwell's position. It was not Oliver's habit to overlook the central or essential point of a treaty; and if the idea did not originate with him, it was floating about as the common property of the Puritan party.

The deputies had no sooner set foot in London for the first time, at the end of June, 1653, than rumors began to run about that part of the English demand would be the exclusion of the Prince of Orange,[2] and the detachment of the province of Holland from its six confederates.[3] These ideas were ripe in the Puritan mind even as early as the appearance of the deputies upon the scene, and could in no form be the suggestion of De Witt or Beverning. At the end of July and beginning of August, 1653, when the fate of the negotiation seemed wavering in the balance on the question of coalition, the outside world believed that the difficulty related to

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[1] "Deductie van de Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende West Vrieslandt," § 4. (See *Resolutien van Consideratie*, p. 34.)

[2] MS. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). M. de Bordeaux-Neufville to M. de Brienne, July 14, 1653. M. de Bordeaux-Neufville thus reports: "On m'assure que cet estat leur demande trois millions pour le desdommagement de la guerre, et des villes de seureté, qu'ils ne puissent avoir qu'un certain nombre de vaisseaux de guerre, qu'ils reçoivent en leur conseil un commissarie anglois et se défassent du prince d'Orange."

[3] Ibid. MS. Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne, August 3, 1653: "Et l'on veut... que la province d'Hollande séperara des autres."

the Prince of Orange.[1] That meant his exclusion. When the four deputies were threatening to return to the Hague to report the demand for coalition, some English public men, seeing that the interest of England lay in a friendly relation with Holland, wished the two nominees of that province to remain to negotiate for Holland alone, if the other deputies would not come to terms,[2] and all this while there had been no demand whatever for exclusion put forward by the English government. It was not till November 28 that the exclusion of the Prince by the States-General from all offices was demanded by the English government, and the hypothesis that it was by Beverning's management that the demand was made by Cromwell seems utterly baseless.

If we except the accidental interview, already explained,[3] between Beverning and Cromwell, in St. James's Park on August 16, which, as far as our knowledge goes, referred merely to the coalition, the earliest hint which we have of any individual and private communication between Beverning and the English government occurs in a letter of Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne of December 11, 1653, by which date there was only before the deputies the demand for a public article excluding the Prince. On the previous night Beverning admitted, in conversation with the French ambassador, that two days previously, *i. e.*, on December 8, a private proposal had been made to him to detach the province of Holland from the others, and he protested to the Frenchman that he had rejected the proposition.[4] Two or three days thereafter, the Rev.

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[1] MS. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne, August 3: "Il sembla par là qu'on veuille que les députez de celle d'Hollande accordent quelques conditions dont les autres ne pourront convenir, et l'on croit que c'est touchant le prince d'Orange, et que c'est la sûreté que les Anglois demandent."

[2] MS. letter of Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), August 11, 1653: "Quelques uns veuillent que les députez de la province d'Hollande ne s'esloignent pas pourtant de cet accommodement. Néantmoins ils tesmoignent le contraire."

[3] See page 309.

[4] MS. Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), December 11, 1653: "J'ay pu recognoistre dans la conversation que j'eus mardy au soir depuis neuf heures jusques à deux heures du matin avec les sieurs Buerning et Jongestal, ils estoient dans une joye toutte particulière de ce que le conseil avoit

Hugh Peters, who had not visited Bordeaux-Neufville for eight months, dined with him, and communicated to him that Beverning had been holding private interviews with two of the Council of State,' meaning without question other communications than that of which Beverning had already informed the ambassador. The Frenchman thereupon requested the deputies to grant him a meeting, at which he asked them how the negotiation was proceeding. Beverning, who had all the brains of the deputation, returned a general and evasive answer. The Frenchman then put the question bluntly—What had taken place at the private interview? This was an unexpected home-thrust, and it placed Beverning in a delicate dilemma. He must either lie, or admit the secret meeting. It probably was not convenient to admit the fact of a private meeting in presence of his Orange colleague, Jongestal. So he told the lie, denied the secret meeting, and in due time retired with his colleagues. The French ambassador had thus extracted nothing from Beverning.

But the meeting was not altogether fruitless. Immediately after the party broke up, Jongestal, the Orangeman, returned privily to him, expressed regret at Beverning's reticence and evasion as to the position of the negotiation, told him what he knew, and added that he had been instructed by Count William, the Friesland stadtholder, to maintain the closest communication with the representative of France. Jongestal then informed the French ambassador that Beverning and Newport, the two nominees of Holland, "had received divers propositions from, and that the former for a long time had had pri-

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relasché les deux prétentions les plus considérables de traversser le traicté . . . et le sieur Buerning m'advoua qu'on lui avoit proposé en particullier depuis deux jours de détascher la province d'Hollande d'avec les autres et touttes de la France, la comprenant néantmoins dans leur traicté. . . . Il me protesta avoir rejetté cette proposition."

[1] MS. Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), December 18: "Je m'estendray un peu plus sur une conversation que je viens d'avoir avec le sieur Jongestal, députté de Frize, depuis dimanche. Ses confrères ne m'avoient point veu quoyqu'on m'eust adverty d'une entrevue particulière du sieur Buerning avec deux du conseil," etc. From what follows it is obvious that the author of his information was Peters.

vate communications with, Cromwell.[1] How Jongestal knew this does not appear, and what these "divers propositions" and "private communications" were is not as yet stated. But this fact is established, that thus early a secret negotiation of some kind was going on.

A fortnight after Bordeaux-Neufville's diplomatic little meeting, a letter was written by De Witt to Beverning and Newport jointly, the two nominees of Holland, which throws some further light upon this transaction, and shows that De Witt had been consulted step by step in reference to it.[2] "I must confess," replies the eminent minister on January 2 (Dutch style), "that the point relating to the Prince of Orange causes me the greatest anxiety. The promise required will certainly not be obtained from some of the provinces, and will undoubtedly not be obtained from the majority. Not only will the promise not be obtained from any of the individual provinces, but it is quite impossible that it could be obtained from the States-General. I had expected, and had always proposed to myself, that the English would have agreed

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[1] MS. letter of December 18, already cited. "Le sieur Buerning me la desavouee, demeurant neantmoins d'accord qu'on leur faisoit esperer un accommodement pourveu quils voulussent attendre la revolution du gouvernement. Ainsy nous nous sommes separez ce matin, mais presentem^t^ vient de sortir l'escuier Jongestal conuyé par monsieur le Comte Guillaume d' entretenir une plus estroicte correspondance avec moy. Il est d'abord convenu de cette conference secrette et dit quil venoit pour reparer la faute qu' avoit faicte son collegue le matin quil ny avoit point assisté et n'en scavoit autre chose sinon qu'on les avoit conviez d'attendre le changement du present regime, et sestendant sur la conduitte des sieurs Beverning et de Nieuport, deputtez de la province d'Hollande, est demeure d'accord quelle estoit differente a la sienne quils avoient escoutté et receu diverses propositions, que le premier depuis longtemp avoit eu des correspondances particullieres avec Monsieur le General dans ces derniers jours, et quil les avoit menassez sils ne souvroient entierement a moy dy venir de son chef comme me declarer tout ce qui se passoit," etc.

[2] The letter, to which this is an answer (dated December $\frac{16}{26}$, 1653), is one of those which have escaped destruction. It shows the strength of the English feeling regarding the Prince of Orange, and of the English desire to exclude him from office: "We fear that the business will especially hang on the Prince of Orange, whom those here will not permit to be advanced to any political or military command or government, either by the States-General or any individual province." *Nijhoff's Bijdragen*, x. 298.

to allow both the States-General and the individual provinces the most absolute freedom either to advance the Prince or not, according to their pleasure; but, on the other hand, that England should stand equally free, in case of such advancement, to renounce the treaty, or adhere to it, as they felt inclined."[1] From this we gather that two proposals at least had been communicated to De Witt, though they had been withheld from the States-General: first, the public article that the States-General should exclude the Prince; and, second, failing that, a proposal that the States of Holland should at least do so. There is nothing in De Witt's letter having reference to the "temperament." With such a letter from De Witt's hand, written in strictest confidence to trusted friends, it is not to be credited that Cromwell's demand for the exclusion of the Prince of Orange was a party device of De Witt's.

By January 5 (Dutch style) Oliver had been shaken out of his original position, and he offered, in writing, to all the deputies to accept a secret article of exclusion from the States-General, instead of a public one.[2]

Whether De Witt's letter of the 2d had arrived or not we cannot say; but this symptom of yielding somewhat brightened the prospect, and the Orangeman Jongestal joined the Hollander Newport (the fourth or Zealand deputy having been for some time dead) in requesting Beverning to see Cromwell privately, in a friendly and non-official way, with the object of reasoning Oliver into the Dutch view.

Now what was Beverning and Newport's frame of mind at this time? We have evidence that on the very day when Beverning was thus requested to seek an interview with Cromwell they were not disposed to be inflexible on the point of exclusion, and were already deliberating about some expedient (whose it is, is still the question) by which Cromwell might be satisfied. Jongestal had somehow acquired a knowledge of this circumstance, but notwithstanding that, he had joined in requesting Beverning to confer with Cromwell in

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[1] MS. letter, De Witt to Van Beverning and Newport, January 2, 1654. *Hague Archives.*

[2] *Verbael*, p. 270.

private. And on the morning of the following day, and some hours before Beverning's private interview with Cromwell took place, the French ambassador had also a private interview with Beverning, in which the latter told him that Cromwell had "offered" to be content with exclusion by Holland alone. "He told me very frankly," writes Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne, "his own sentiments and those of his province, both on the exclusion of the Prince and the comprehension of France in the treaty which the deputies are negotiating. Their aim is to profit by every occasion which will humiliate the House of Orange, even by accepting this overture and making peace, even if France is not comprehended in it."[1] This was the impression which Beverning had left on the Frenchman's mind.

With this tolerably clear purpose in his head, Beverning left the French ambassador, and in the afternoon went to have his interview with Cromwell. In the official record of the interview, which is necessarily from Beverning's own hand, we have the next hint of the clandestine negotiation with Cromwell. It appears now, in specific terms, and is reported as emanating from Cromwell, who is made to say that if the States of Holland would give England the assurance that they would persist in their resolution of August 2, 1653, Oliver would accept the assurance as sufficient.[2] This was Oliver's offer on January 6, only one day after he had remodelled his first demand, at least so far as Beverning states it. Oliver's reasons for this new position are thus summarized:[3]

"And concerning the twelfth article, touching the Prince of Orange, the Lord-General could not by any argument be induced to depart from it. He stated at length the wrongs and sufferings of which that House had been the cause, adding that the English government would never have perfect security against the Dutch so long as it feared that the supreme authority and the direction of the army and fleet might fall into the hands of those who might have pretensions against England, or who

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[1] MS. Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne, January 7, 1654, reporting a conversation with Jongestal on the 5th, and also one with Beverning on the same date.

[2] *Verbael*, p. 278. This interview took place on January 6, 1654 (O. S.).

[3] Ibid. p. 277.

were so closely related to those claiming its Crown. And after some conversation as to the authority which belonged to the various States, and as to the bond of fidelity which binds all the servants of the State, great and small, to it, the uncertainty whether the young Prince might live, and what his character might be, and lastly as to the resolutions which the States-General or the Provincial States might take in reference to the Prince, the Lord-General answered that these arguments were more specious than satisfactory; that he thought that it would be of importance to the States-General themselves to be agreed upon this point; that he did not doubt of the intention of the States of Holland, as he had seen their resolution on this subject, passed a considerable time ago, which he thought was very vigorous and smacked of true freedom, adding that he knew well that a point of this nature which affected all the provinces would take a long time to be brought about; that the desire of the English government was to bring this treaty to a conclusion quickly; and, therefore, if the province of Holland would grant the assurance that it would persist in the resolution referred to, the English government would accept that as an expedient, in order to be rid of the business altogether."

There can be no doubt that there is positive misrepresentation as well as an important *suppressio veri* in this narrative. We cannot believe that Cromwell, as this paraphrase implies, ever meant to let the States-General go free, and the obligation which he meant to exact from that body is not even hinted at. This obligation turned out to be the famous "temperament."

To this speech of Cromwell's, Beverning reports himself to have returned the formal answer that he could do nothing but report the demand for exclusion to the States-General. But we shall be much mistaken if it was not at this interview that the clandestine arrangement was finally put into shape whereby the States-General were to bind themselves in the treaty that every future captain-general and stadtholder should be sworn to observe it, and whereby the States of Holland should grant a private bond not to consent to the election of a captain-general for the Union and not to elect a stadtholder for their own province.

Notwithstanding this arrangement, it is somewhat strange that the deputies, on the day after the interview, sent in a paper, which had been prepared the day before the interview,

asking, among other things, that the article demanding the exclusion of the Prince should be entirely deleted. They thus ignored the result of Beverning's conversation altogether. Cromwell in his reply also ignored it, and again demanded the exclusion of the Prince by the States-General, which, he said, might be contained in a private article.[1] The next reference to the clandestine negotiation appears in a letter from the French ambassador, written six days after Beverning's interview with Cromwell, in which the Frenchman defined the expedient which the two nominees of Holland had been contemplating at the date of his last report, as one by which they would "conclude a secret article with Cromwell, refer it to the States of Holland, and meanwhile sign the treaty."[2] His letter was written on the day before the deputies left London to report progress at the Hague.

The subtle Frenchman had a warm friend, or found, rather, a useful tool in the Orangeman Jongestal. When it seemed possible that the negotiation might be brought to a successful close, he had operated upon this poor dupe to the extent that the poor dupe declared he would sign no preliminary treaty unless France was included in it. He would rather return home alone, he said to the Frenchman, than sign it, exclaiming that he was the "serviteur de France et de la maison de Nassau."[3] The servant of anybody or anything that would damage Holland! The treacherous Frenchman, after having wormed a portion of Beverning's secret out of Beverning, revealed it immediately to Jongestal, and proceeded to pour new poison into his mind. "I have filled him," he wrote, a few days after the above communication, "with jealousy of the expedient which his colleagues propose of a secret article" by Holland about the Prince of Orange.[4] Jongestal departed, chafing against his colleagues, but returned to him at night toned down—"a little changed," says the Frenchman, "which

[1] *Verbael*, p. 279.

[2] MS. Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne (*Bib. Nat. Paris*), January 12.

[3] MS. letter, Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne, of January 7, reporting a conversation which took place on the 5th. *Bib. Nat. Paris.*

[4] The letter of January 12. *Bib. Nat. Paris.*

makes me fear that he is no longer resolute for the cause of France." During the interval he had passed through Beverning's soothing and diplomatic hands, and had received a promise from his colleagues to make renewed efforts to obtain the inclusion of France in the treaty.[1]

Between this soothing down of Jongestal and the departure of the deputies from London for Gravesend a day or two only elapsed, but in the brief interval Jongestal's jealousy had been re-aroused. Some time during this short period he had hurried to the Frenchman's residence to tell him of new "secret conferences" on the part of his colleagues—conferences, these, at the last moment; and he gave him also a parting promise to communicate everything minutely to M. Chanut, who had recently and unexpectedly appeared in the Hague as ambassador of France. Beverning also visited Bordeaux-Neufville, and begged him, as a farewell request, earnestly to keep secret what he had told him about the Prince of Orange — not dreaming that his confidence had been already betrayed![2]

All this correspondence seems to put beyond doubt that the exclusion by Holland alone was a demand originating with Cromwell. If it really did emanate, in the first instance, from Beverning and Newport, it was because it was the last shift for peace—a movement forced upon Holland, as the war had been, by the bigotry and the want of true patriotic feeling among the followers of the House of Orange.

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[1] Letter of January 12.

[2] MS. Bordeaux-Neufville to De Brienne (*Bib. Nat. Paris*), January 15. Jongestal's promise was: "Il me venoit advertir des conferences secrettes et inclinations de ses confreres, et en parlant il m'a donne parolle d'informer tres exactement Mons. Chanut." Beverning also at his visit made a kind of promise, "et m'a promis aussy, mais ne pas sy positivement, d'entretenir correspondance avec Mons. Chanut."

Chapter IX.

DE WITT DECEIVES THE STATES-GENERAL, THE STATES OF HOLLAND, AND CROMWELL.

The Hague was full of rumors, when the deputies arrived from Gravesend, that a clandestine arrangement had been made between Holland and the English government, and some members of the States-General were talking out-of-doors about putting the deputies on oath, and interrogating them as to what had been done.[1] In the midst of the rumors, Beverning, after remaining in the Hague a week, skulked out of it and returned secretly to London.

During his week's sojourn in his native province, he and his colleagues had made their official report to the States-General. Beverning also reported the commission from "persons in authority," to the effect that Cromwell would be willing to substitute a clause requiring every captain-general and stadtholder to swear to observe the treaty, for the express exclusion originally demanded by the English government.[2] This was made to appear to be Cromwell's extreme demand, because the imperativeness of his further demand for a secret bond of exclusion of the Prince by the province of Holland alone was concealed even from the States of that Province.[3]

The States of Holland, ignorant that an act of exclusion would be required of them, snatched at once at the scheme

[1] Letter, De Witt to Van Beverning, February 6, 1654. Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijlagen*, p. 8.

[2] That Beverning did make this report appears from the *Deductie, Narratio Facti*, §§ 4, 5.

[3] The report of the deputies showed in several places that this secret exclusion by Holland had been talked of, but Beverning and De Witt probably made it appear that all demands were cancelled and superseded by the "temperament" communicated by the "persons in authority." See *Deductie, Narratio Facti*, § 7.

which the "persons of authority" had communicated to Beverning, and honestly proposed its acceptance in the States-General.[1] Beverning was no fool, and both he and De Witt must unquestionably have known that a further demand by Cromwell lay behind. Of the deceit now practised, both on the States-General and the States of Holland, they and the conclave which was working with them were the authors.

Such was the public history of the week during which Van Beverning was in Holland. Its secret history we are left to imagine. Conjecture must crowd it with long, secret, and earnest deliberations on the part of the conclave—all resulting in some secret instruction to Beverning and in his hasty and clandestine return to England. Again, some false suggestion, or some suggestion only partly true, was made by the conclave to the States of Holland to lead them to authorize Beverning's departure. It was probably, among other things, represented to them that Beverning should return to London to work out the "temperament," or keep the negotiation open. They sanctioned his departure without, according to De Witt, giving him any instructions, written or verbal, what he was to do. His instructions issued, in fact, from the conclave, the foremost man of whom was De Witt; and whatever these instructions were, the States of Holland had no knowledge of them.

The return of Beverning to England is not to be imputed to De Witt. It seems to be due either to the other members of the conclave or to Beverning himself. The difficulty which overshadowed all others in De Witt's mind did not now lie in England, but at home. How were the Provinces to be induced to ratify what the deputies had adjusted? He wanted Beverning to remain with him in the Hague, in order, with his skill and knowledge, to help to work out the ratification.[2] His opinion was overruled, and Beverning set out for London.

Van Beverning's mysterious disappearance aroused the suspicious Provinces, and quickened the general belief in Holland's bad faith. Protests immediately followed from two of

[1] MS. Public Resolutions of States-General, January 22, 24, 26, and 28; and Resolutions of States of Holland, January 27; also Secret Resolutions, p. 120.

[2] Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijlagen*, pp. 6, 7.

the outwitted Provinces.[1] De Witt finessed with the protesting Provinces until he got the protest partially withdrawn, stroked them down under the pretence that no new instructions were required—that Beverning had simply returned in his old character to keep the negotiation in life, as it ran the risk of falling through unless one of the deputies was in London.[2] Such was the diplomatic dust which he scattered in the eyes of the States-General; deep down in the reticent man's heart lay the secret of his and the conclave's unknown communications with Beverning.

Beverning appeared in London in the twofold capacity of representative of the States-General and of Holland, or perhaps we should say of the conclave. Owing to the haste and the secrecy of his departure, he had no credentials, and no authority to recognize the Protector's government. De Witt had not overlooked these points. To obtain the much-longed-for peace he was eager to gratify the Protector. He set machinery in motion to suppress an offensive pamphlet circulating under the name of "Protector Weerwolf," and he paid certain arrears due to a Colonel Cromwell in the Dutch service. He had striven to obtain from the States-General a friendly recognition of the Protectorate, and had obtained a resolution by the States of Holland approving of a compliment which Beverning had paid Oliver when the latter assumed his title. The old pride and obstinacy of the other Provinces were still unsubdued, and, accordingly, Beverning sneaked away upon his first instructions. Oliver, whose eye reached into the interior doings of every European court, and sometimes, it must be owned, into the contents of private letters,[3] knew of the indignity even before Beverning reached London.[4] He was not the man to stand this. He paid it promptly back by refusing to admit Beverning to audience, and the deputy had to write to the Hague for an

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[1] Zealand and Friesland. Letter, De Witt to Beverning, Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijlagen*, pp. 7–13.

[2] Sypesteyn's *Geschiedk. Bijdragen;* De Witt to Beverning, February 6, 1654; *Bijlagen*, p. 9–12; also Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 911.

[3] *Verbael*, pp. 306, 307.

[4] Ibid. p. 294.

official character and a formal recognition of Oliver's government.[1]

Beverning's letters gave rise to a violent debate, at the instance of Friesland, as to his function, and whether or not he should be described as an envoy of the States-General. De Witt's patience and management overcame the opposition, and Beverning's character as deputy of the States-General was duly admitted. The provincial resolutions on the adjusted articles were also coming in, and all agreed in their main features with the resolution of Holland, the chief point of difference being a stipulation by Zealand, who led the way, that if the "temperament" were not agreed to the negotiation should be broken off. De Witt, in sending to Beverning a copy of the opinion of Zealand, suppressed the obnoxious stipulations,[2] in order that Beverning, by presenting the mutilated copy to Oliver, might be the abler to misrepresent to him the state of the facts. Deceit again! The first functionary of Holland is evidently a clever juggler—a slippery man, who must be well watched, one whom a Zealander or a Frisian, and even Oliver, must not quite trust. History, however, must also impartially consider how much of the juggling was forced upon him to enable reason and common-sense to gain the mastery in the deliberations of the Republic.

He had now before him two ends—first, to elude or soften the stipulation of Zealand and certain other minor stipulations of the Provinces; and, secondly, to obtain the recognition of Oliver's government. The sharp, precise terms of Zealand's stipulation were, by a majority of four Provinces, modified. Holland's or Cromwell's "temperament" remained in force, but it was not clogged with Zealand's condition that it should be imperative;[3] and Beverning, another slippery man, was pro-

[1] Beverning, according to his own account, was treated with very scant courtesy, and even with rudeness, on his arrival. (Beverning to De Witt, February 6, in *Nijhoff's Bijdragen*, x. 301.) This is rather remarkable, if Beverning had parted with Cromwell twelve days before with the express object of working out a scheme of exclusion in the Hague.

[2] Sypesteyn's *Geschiedk. Bijdragen*, 2de afl.; *Bijlagen*, p. 16.

[3] MS. Secret Resolutions of the States-General, February 19 (*Hague Archives*); Sypesteyn's *Geschiedk. Bijdr.* 2de afl.; *Bijlagen;* De Witt to Beverning, p. 21.

hibited from altering it. The objection to recognize the Protectorate then assumed the shape of a conflict whether the authority should be at once sent to Beverning or reserved until the other envoys from the States-General should proceed to London. De Witt and Holland gained their object here also, and Beverning was authorized to congratulate Oliver on his new dignity. De Witt did even more; he wrung or coaxed out of the reluctant Provinces a resolution empowering Beverning, if not joined by his colleagues by a fixed date, to finally adjust, sign, and conclude the articles of peace, provided he employed his utmost exertions to obtain the inclusion in it of France; moreover, it was arranged that the deputies were now to be constituted extraordinary ambassadors.[1]

From this time forward we have Beverning personating three characters in London. He is Extraordinary Ambassador for the States-General, with a line of duty before him clearly defined, the chief end of which is to work out the "temperament." He also represents the States of Holland, without instructions, but with the same end distinctly in view and no other. And, thirdly, he is the secret organ of the conclave, with instructions or an understanding as yet unknown, except by inference, to history. In his first capacity he had now lain idle for some weeks in London, Oliver holding, reasonably enough, that any State seeking a treaty from his government must first recognize it. In his second and third capacity, history is silent in this earlier stage as to his doings.[2]

Meanwhile, De Witt, greatly troubled, was "letting his thoughts continually run" on "the point connected with the Prince of Orange,"[3] meaning, undoubtedly, the demand for a secret exclusion of the Prince by Holland as the complement of the "temperament" by the States-General. He and the conclave deliberated thereon,[4] and their views were intrusted

[1] MS. Secret Resolutions of States-General, February 19.

[2] The letters frequently quoted from *Nijhoff's Bijdragen* were probably sham letters, sent to De Witt, to be shown to persons not in the secret; consequently they are of little value in the present inquiry.

[3] Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijl.* 27; Letter, De Witt to Beverning, March 3, 1654.

[4] Ibid. In this letter De Witt gives the name of the friends with whom he secretly deliberated.

to Newport, the second nominee of Holland, then on the point of departing with the nominee of Friesland to London to join Beverning there. De Witt "from his heart wishes, for many reasons, that the view of the States-General may be worked out,"[1] *i. e.*, that Oliver would not insist on a secret exclusion by Holland. But if the "temperament" would not, as it stood, satisfy Oliver's views, he recorded his idea of the way in which the States-General were to be tricked or deceived. It is an unbroken series of deceptions that he is practising; he was deceiving the States-General, deceiving the States of Holland, and deceiving Cromwell. The first deception he now contemplated was that the States-General were to be made to ratify the treaty with the "temperament" in it, as if Oliver had yielded up the point of exclusion. Then Beverning was apparently to pledge Holland to exclude the Prince by a secret act, but the States of Holland were also to be deceived, and were to be made to ratify the treaty as if Oliver had accepted the "temperament," for the point of a secret act of exclusion by the Province was not to be mooted even in the States of Holland until the treaty was completely ratified.[2] What was to follow next must depend on De Witt's ingenuity and the circumstances of the moment. In this way the most essential condition of the peace was kept concealed even from the governing body that was to grant it.

This was De Witt's first plan of procedure, firm and clear in the moment of its birth, but soon growing unstable and uncertain. His second will appear immediately. Under any circumstances, one decided gain for him would be to prevent the question of ratification from being carried down to the Provinces and municipalities, where it would only be delayed by new hagglings for better terms. He therefore persuaded the States-General—blind to what he was doing—to pass a resolution, that if the ambassadors concluded the treaty in accordance with their instructions, the States-General would ratify it without referring to the States of the Provinces for

[1] Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijl.* 27; Letter, De Witt to Beverning, March 3, 1654.

[2] On these points De Witt and the conclave were unanimous.

their sanction. In so many ways did they become a plaything in the hands of this consummate master of strategy, who, inch by inch, was laboring, with deep forethought, toward his goal.

Beverning met his two colleagues at Gravesend[1] (the place of the deceased Van de Perre was not filled up), and they proceeded up the river to the Tower Wharf, where Oliver's state carriages were waiting to receive them. From the Tower to Westminster they and their followers were conveyed through crowded streets, amidst shouts of welcome and prayers for the success of the negotiation. Visibly to the eye of history they haggled for a month about the terms on which Denmark was to be comprehended in the treaty; but all the time, unknown of men,[2] a subterranean negotiation was conducted by Beverning of which there is almost no trace whatever in De Witt's letters of the next four weeks, and which at the end of that period bursts up for a moment to the light of day in one or two of his surviving communications to Beverning. It seems that Oliver has "required" from the States of Holland an act of exclusion. The confidential correspondence proceeds upon the basis that the idea originated with Oliver, and De Witt is seen to be struggling against it. He was honestly trying with might and main to carry the "temperament." If Oliver would not yield, then De Witt, as the weaker man, must. The prophecy of failure was already upon him, and he desired that a definition of the Act which Oliver demanded should be sent him. Even this request had a deep design in it. He looked round about him at every step with comprehensive eye; narrowly foresaw the difficulties that would meet him, and rough-hewed the future. His design was to overwhelm the opposition that might be offered by any of the towns of Holland, by showing them that peace without exclusion was impossible.

The plan which seemed so firm and stable a month ago had

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[1] On March 10. Beverning had been alone in London from February 4 to March 10.

[2] We have put aside entirely here the narrative in De Witt's *Deductie, Narratio Facti*, which is unfaithful. It is a skilful, lawyer-like statement—so false that it would take much time to point out where it is true; and so true that it would take much space to show where it is false.

thus wavered and vanished. If he was now to coerce his province by telling them that a treaty was hopeless without exclusion, then Oliver's demand for exclusion could not be kept concealed until they had been all decoyed into ratification. Here is his second plan in his own words to Van Beverning: "In my opinion it is in the highest degree necessary, if without such act of exclusion the matter is desperate, that your nobleness will not only make the same known to their noble great mightinesses (the States of Holland) in your first letter, but that you will also continuously, with intermission of a few days at a time, and even by express despatch, reiterate it. . . . It is also, in my judgment, very necessary that your nobleness should constantly assure their noble great mightinesses, if such can be done with truth, of the straightforward intention of the Lord Protector, and that that which is prescribed proceeds only out of a desire to make the peace enduring, in order that the arguments which will undoubtedly be drawn by unfriendly, suspicious men, and which possibly might succeed in overturning the whole negotiation, may be powerfully answered."[1]

Such was his opinion, on April 3, of the manner in which Van Beverning should plough and prepare the minds of the States of Holland for an exclusion. How uncertain the whole situation was we see from the fact that two days later this plan too had vanished, and he positively saw no course before him. These two days' farther pondering had landed him at the following results:

"Even if the recess of the States of Holland," he writes to Beverning, "could serve as a plausible argument [to Oliver] for the Act of Exclusion not being delivered, nevertheless I fear that the Protector will not ratify the treaty without the previous delivery of the act—at least, not without a guarantee that the act will be given him; and I do not see how such a guarantee can be furnished."

Up to this moment there may be promises and pledges by Beverning and De Witt, but these cannot bind the States of Holland.

[1] MS. *Hague Archives;* and Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijl.;* Letter to Van Beverning, April 3, p. 29.

"But if ratifications could be exchanged without delivery of the Act of Exclusion, then I fear that the Act of Exclusion would not be obtained —whereby not only would the exclusion be frustrated, but the negotiation would be broken off. There are difficulties on all sides. By simple exchange of ratifications, there is the difficulty which I have now mentioned; by the previous furnishing of an Act of Exclusion, there is the danger that the deputies of the other Provinces, coming to hear of the deliberation of Holland on that subject, may communicate the same to their principals, and expressly instruct your nobleness not to exchange the ratification till further orders. Everything considered, I see nothing better than that the Lord Protector, if he cannot be moved to a simple exchange of ratifications . . . should permit the ratifications to be exchanged under a written declaration by him to your nobleness that if the Act of Exclusion is not delivered to him by a fixed date the treaty shall be held as not ratified. Such a declaration would impart some weight to our labors here, although not so much as if the ratification was held back."[1]

There was no light for him during all the next ten days. On April 15 he and those to whom he "dared" speak on the subject still found it "very dangerous to mention the Act of Exclusion to the States of Holland at the same time that the treaty as signed by the ambassadors is submitted to them for ratification; from a fear, on the one hand, that, even in Holland itself, difficulty should be raised as to ratifying on such terms, or lest delay should occur; and from a fear, on the other hand, that, if it is mentioned in the States of Holland, a knowledge of it will inevitably reach the other Provinces before the ratification is despatched."[2]

The articles, finally adjusted, were now expected daily, and De Witt's embarrassment did not diminish as the crisis approached. The negotiation he was carrying on secretly with Cromwell was a violation of the union between the provinces; and his concealment of Beverning's letters to him, as Grand Pensionary, was a violation of his instructions. But the man, as we have said, was a master of strategy; he would have been a wary general if he had been a trained fighter. He endeavored so to fashion the appearance of his clandestine work

[1] MS. letters of De Witt, *Hague Archives;* and Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijlagen*, pp. 30, 31; Letter to Beverning, April 5.

[2] MS. letter of De Witt to Beverning, April 15, 1654, *Hague Archives;* Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijlagen*, p. 32.

that he should not be open to the criticism of enemies that he had violated either the Union or the conditions on which he held office. He was punctilious on the latter point to an extreme degree; every gift, the slightest mark of friendship or courtesy from any one, was immediately and politely returned.

How he arranged the facts so as to overcome the difficulty about the breach of the Union will afterward appear. As to eluding the conditions of his own office, it is probable that the plan adopted by him and Beverning, of returning each other's letters, was resorted to for that end among others. The official character of the letters thus became doubtful. He also sometimes required Beverning to attach some condition to a letter which would found an excuse for withholding it from the States of Holland. But the best course of all was to get rid of the States of Holland at this critical moment—to push them prematurely into their Easter recess. "I can find no better plan," he writes, "of avoiding the communication of the secret to the States of Holland than that they should disperse [for their Easter recess]; and I shall try to bring that about, although there are many obstacles to surmount." The difficulties were surmounted; and at the waving of this Prospero's wand the States of Holland dissolved cheerfully for their holidays, and the stage around him was clear.[1]

This was not enough. There were still suspicious men in the Hague, and inquisitive men writing him from all parts of Holland, and men to whom he was expected to volunteer information when letters were received from England. These also must be juggled with and deceived, if the peace was to be driven through; and peace, not the exclusion of the House of Orange, was De Witt's real end. To meet their case he desired Beverning to write him sham letters recording the trifles of the public negotiation, which he might show to such people when they inquired about its progress.[1] With these

[1] MS. letter, De Witt to Beverning, April 15, 1654, *Hague Archives;* and Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 33; also *Brieven van en aen De Witt*, v. 330. The States of Holland separated on April 20.

[1] MS. letter of De Witt to Beverning, April 15, 1654, *Hague Archives;* also Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 33.

in his pocket he marched about the Hague proof against all suspicion. Complete armor was needed by any Minister of Holland in those days. Watchful, suspicious eyes were everywhere; every breath of wind bore about the whisperings of lying tongues; acute and hostile minds scanned distrustfully every act of Holland or its leading men; it was through a scathing ordeal of criticism that Holland's policy had to run; and if there was a man in Holland who could clothe himself from head to foot in complete steel, that man was John De Witt.

But, alas! the brave Achilles had his vulnerable heel; there was a joint in De Witt's armor, and Prince William, stadtholder of Friesland, reached him by bribing the great Minister's clerk!

His arrangements were not completed an hour too soon. On the day after the States of Holland separated, the treaty, signed and sealed by the ambassadors and by English commissioners, arrived in the Hague with the "temperament" in it.[1] The States-General unanimously ratified it on the 22d, without reference to their principles (the Provincial States), and without knowing the truth of the matter. On the 23d the ratification was hurried off to England—the deed was done!

What next? The States of Holland were as yet in the dark about Cromwell's demand that they should by a secret act exclude the Prince. They were in recess, and had undoubtedly separated, believing, like the States-General, that Oliver had accepted the "temperament" pure and simple.[2] Oliver had acted on one of De Witt's hints, and declared that he was willing to ratify the treaty under a protest that it would be null and void unless an act of Exclusion were delivered to him by Holland within two or three months.

Van Beverning and Newport had been well primed by De Witt, and in transmitting the adjusted and signed treaty they made known Oliver's declaration and protest in a private letter to the States of Holland (in recess), and announced that

[1] It arrived during the evening of April 21.

[2] De Witt's *Deductie, Narratio Facti*, § 78. The *Deductie* may be trusted here; De Witt would not dare to put a lie in the mouth of the States of Holland.

there was no hope of peace unless the Act of Exclusion were granted. They mentioned that they had promised to Oliver to recommend the granting of the Act.[1] But the messenger who brought this private letter to the States of Holland brought also a private letter to De Witt, which held out a hope that Cromwell might be persuaded to retreat from his demand. De Witt, who grasped the situation too justly, had no such faith, and lest Van Beverning's idle delusion might shake the steadfast purpose of the conclave, and as hesitation would ultimately endanger the peace, he did not make it known even to the most trusted of the junta.

How fortunate it was that the States of Holland were in recess when the private letter addressed to them came! De Witt with the right hand pushed, as we have seen, the ratification through the States-General within twenty-four hours, and with his left prevented the States of Holland from being summoned to deliberate on Van Beverning and Newport's letter until the ratification was safe in England and apparently beyond recall. There was a great principle involved in keeping the States of Holland ignorant of this letter until the States-General had ratified the treaty. The tenth article of the Union prohibited any individual Province from treating with any foreign Power, and the absolute ignorance of the States of Holland, when the treaty was ratified, of Cromwell's demand and of the pledge — as undoubtedly there was some kind of pledge—of the two ambassadors, preserved, according to De Witt, the good faith of Holland with reference to the other Provinces, and kept it within the letter of the Union. The States of Holland were not summoned until April 28.

We have said that the ambassadors, after their arrival on March 10 (N. S.), haggled for a month about the method of settling the English claims against Denmark. Another point which gave some trouble was the adjustment of the claims which the trading companies of the two republics put forward against each other for damages and loss alleged to have

[1] Letter, Beverning and Newport to the States of Holland, April 5–15, 1654, published in Nijhoff's *Bijdragen*, x. deel, 3de stuk, p. 238; Sypesteyn's *Gesch. Bijdr.*; Letter, De Witt to Van Beverning and Newport, May 9, pp. 54, 55.

been sustained in the East Indies, Greenland, Brazil, and elsewhere. The damages inflicted by Denmark, by arresting ships in the Sound, were estimated by the English ship-owners and merchants at £140,000, for which Oliver, as a preliminary, insisted on adequate security being delivered with the ratification of the treaty. With much difficulty, Beverning and his colleagues induced twelve Dutch merchants, resident in London, to become sureties for that amount; and the States-General entered into a bond to recoup them the sum, if they were called upon to pay it, while the three ambassadors signed a personal bond to the merchants pledging their own estates for the like amount, with £20,000 additional to cover any possible loss the sureties might sustain. Eighteen of the twenty-two arrested ships were handed over by Denmark to commissioners sent to Copenhagen to receive them, and certain sums had to be paid there at the same time by Denmark, to enable the owners to put them in a condition fit for the voyage home. The claims for the deterioration the ships had undergone, as well as for the ships not restored, and for the value of their cargoes, were referred by the treaty to four arbiters, who were to be allowed five weeks from a given date to make their award, and who, thereafter, were "to be shut up in a chamber by themselves, without fire, candle, meat, drink, or other refreshment, till they came to an agreement." On the last day before they were to be shut up, Oliver and the ambassadors met in Whitehall and received the award. The loss and damages were fixed at £97,973 0*s.* 10*d.*, which sum the States-General were ordered to pay, for the use of the owners, within twenty-eight days after date, to such persons as Oliver might name.

The claims of the English and Dutch East India Companies against each other, from the early years of the century to 1652, were estimated by the respective Companies at £2,695,999, and £2,069,861, without interest, and exclusive of several claims not detailed. All questions between the Companies were referred to eight arbiters, who issued an award requiring the Dutch Company to restore the Isle of Poleroon to the English Company, to pay the same company £85,000, and to

pay the heirs of twelve Englishmen, who were victims of the Amboyna outrages in 1622, various specified sums, amounting in all to £3615. On this award being complied with, all disputes between the two Companies were to be at an end. A few points connected with questions in other parts of the world were left undisposed of by the arbiters; but it was thus that Oliver healed up sores which the feebler diplomacy of the last two Stuart kings had been altogether unable to cure.

BOOK VI.

EXCLUSION OF THE HOUSE OF ORANGE.

Chapter I.

DE WITT TRICKS HOLLAND INTO EXCLUDING THE HOUSE OF ORANGE.

The summons of the States of Holland to assemble on the 28th was unexpected, and breathed no hint of the business for which they were convened. Summonses calling them together generally stated the business, but its omission on this occasion was another stroke of De Witt's astuteness. It would have frustrated his object to have had the subject talked of in the town councils, and in addition the municipal delegates would have been despatched from the various towns with instructions of a definite kind which might have prevented the passing of the exclusion.

The meeting on the 28th (Tuesday) was a full meeting. Only one town was meagrely represented, and out of the ten nobles two merely were absent. De Witt proposed,[1] before the business commenced, that every man should be sworn to secrecy; and they all took an oath not to divulge the nature of the business for which they had been assembled. The letter received from the two ambassadors during the recess was then read, and sharp criticisms were directed against them by a few of the municipal deputations for not making known at an earlier date the bad reception with which the "temperament" had met. When the opinion of the deputations was called for, five — among whom were Dordrecht (to which De Witt's father had just been appointed burgomaster) and Amsterdam — robustly declared in favor of granting the Act; one deputation spoke against it; two would vote either way with the majority; but nine declined to commit their towns with-

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 925.

out instructions from them, though most of the representatives themselves personally declared for the Act. Of the nobles present, three were favorable, three unfavorable, and two indicated no opinion. Under these circumstances there was no course open but to postpone the discussion and let the question be carried in some form to the municipalities.[1] This was a frustration of both De Witt's hopes and plans. Again he manœuvred, and this time to crush the legitimate expression of opinion in the town councils themselves. Not only was he afraid lest the secret should reach the Orange party, but also lest open discussion might yield an adverse result. To prevent this he induced the deputations which were departing for their respective towns to agree that the ruling burgomasters should be put under oath of secrecy, and that the contents of the letter should be communicated to them alone. Only in the event of the burgomasters refusing to incur the responsibility of deciding upon a course was the letter from Van Beverning and Newport to be laid before the town councils, and these likewise were to be sworn not to disclose its nature.[2]

And meanwhile Prince William went on bribing De Witt's managing clerk. This same week the Prince astounded De Witt by telling him what the States of Holland were doing.[3]

One of the absentees from the Tuesday's meeting was Brederode, descendant of the Counts of Holland, allied by marriage to the House of Orange, and president of the Order of Nobles. He was field-marshal in the pay of Holland, and commander-in-chief of the army of the Republic, so long as no captain-general existed. He had thus a personal interest in no captain-general being appointed. On this genial but weak man De Witt had worked, and De Witt's blandishments and his own interests had brought him round to support the views

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[1] Letter, De Witt to Beverning and Newport, April 29, 1654. To this letter, which is reproduced in Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 38, we owe our knowledge of what took place at this meeting of the 28th. See Resolutions of Holland, April 28, 1654.

[2] Resolution of States of Holland, April 28.

[3] De Witt to Beverning, May 5; Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 45.

of Holland. De Witt had counted on his attendance at the meeting to support the Act of Exclusion. The split among the nobles which the vote of that day revealed rendered it necessary that every favorable vote should be recorded, and on De Witt's urgent appeal Brederode came to the Hague to support, at the resumed discussion, the exclusion of the House to which he was allied.

Most of the deputations had returned again by Friday (1st May), the day fixed for the resumption of the business, and the States of Holland met once more in solemn session. Brederode was there at the forenoon sitting, grievously afflicted, however, with a *flux de ventre*, as he termed it, and he voted bravely for the exclusion. The nobles voted for it by a majority merely—even Brederode's influence and example had not made them unanimous. Most of the towns were in favor of granting the Act;[1] but while the opinions were being taken, and at the very moment when sharp criticisms were being indulged in, a letter from Beverning and Newport arrived, addressed to the States of Holland, and a great packet, in the eyes of all the meeting, was handed to De Witt.[2] The former announced that the ratification of the States-General had been received, and that Oliver had only consented to exchange ratifications and to proclaim the peace on receiving a promise from the two nominees of Holland that an Act of Exclusion by that province would be delivered to him within a few days, and failing delivery, that the treaty would not be binding upon him. The packet to De Witt returned the clandestine correspondence which he had been previously carrying on with Beverning.

The eyes of all, especially of the hostilely-disposed, were on De Witt, but history records not how he kept his countenance. In his next letter, in the bitterness of his feelings, he rebuked Beverning keenly for his indiscretion in not causing his messenger to deliver the confidential communications to

[1] Letter, De Witt to Van Beverning and Newport, May 1. This letter contains an account of the proceedings of the forenoon meeting of May 1. Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 43.

[2] De Witt to Beverning, May 5; Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 45.

him in strict privacy.[1] By the time when Beverning's letters were delivered the States of Holland had sat an hour beyond their usual period of rising, and, not to excite suspicion by a protracted sitting, they immediately adjourned till the afternoon.

The letter and the short interval for dinner had caused all parties to gravitate into their position. Brederode was absent from the afternoon meeting; his *flux de ventre* had sent him to bed,[2] and he lay there waiting impatiently for the vote. At last he dictated a note to De Witt, anxiously inquiring about the result.[3] The result of the afternoon meeting was that the nobles voted unanimously for granting the Act of Exclusion by Holland; thirteen of the towns declared also for it, making fourteen votes for the exclusion. Two towns —Leyden and Edam—voted positively against it, and the others either temporized or were not instructed.[4] To give these uninstructed deputies time to receive their orders from the municipal bodies which they represented, a further adjournment occurred till Monday 4.

The meeting on this second Monday was stormy. The opposition now consisted definitely of four towns—Haarlem, Leyden, Enckhuysen, and Edam, and they directed many keen and biting remarks against the ambassadors Beverning and Newport for their reticence. Some insisted on making Cromwell's protest known to the States-General. De Witt, who never lost temper in the warmest debate, could not soothe the embittered feelings of the opposition. "With all conceivable reasons," as he himself expresses it, he strove to induce the hostile deputations to renounce their opposition that a resolution of such weight should be passed unanimously. Failing

[1] De Witt to Beverning, May 5, reproduced in Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijlagen*, p. 45.

[2] MS. Brederode to De Witt, May 1. *Hague Archives.* [3] Ibid.

[4] De Witt appears to have written the letter of May 1 to Beverning and Newport, already cited, in the interval between the forenoon and afternoon meetings. While giving an account of the former, it makes no reference to the result of the latter meeting. For what took place at the afternoon meeting, see MS. De Witt to Beverning and Newport, written in the evening of the same day, May 1, *Hague Archives.* The letter is of considerable length.

in this, he was for passing it by a majority—a course which the opposition declared to be in conflict with the constitution of the Province. It was one of those questions, they asserted, which should be settled by a unanimous vote. This was simply a mode of transferring supreme power, on all crucial questions, to the minority. They demanded that the question, whether it was a point requiring unanimity, or on which a majority merely might decide, should itself be put to the vote. De Witt was too wary to put this issue, knowing well that he would be outvoted, as many of the towns which had already consented to the Act had also expressed a desire that it should be passed unanimously. Brederode was again absent. His health was breaking up, and the dread messenger which comes to all was beginning to deliver premonitory knocks at his door. One year more and the last summons will come, and the black shadows will fall upon him, and he will pass away and become a feeble, lingering memory among men. In the agony of the debate, while the question was still trembling in the balance, De Witt wrote to him entreating him to come at once to the meeting. Brederode could not come. He was again in bed. "We" (Brederode's princely plural) "pray you to believe that it is impossible" ("*overmits wij*"—again the princely plural—"*de purgasi huyden morgen so laet hebben ingenomen*),"[1] "but we shall attend to-morrow morning at as early an hour as you please," if the debate can be postponed. After so many adjournments the suggestion was preposterous. De Witt impressed upon the States of Holland that it was not a point to be argued and reargued at successive meetings. The hour was now half-past seven in the evening, and there was no prospect of agreement. Turning the flank of the discussion, De Witt suggested that, as the evening was wearing on, he should be permitted to retire into an adjoining room to, at least, frame the Act and be ready for whatever the States should determine. This was De Witt's method—to steal imperceptibly by side movements, crab-like, toward his goal. The proposal was temperate and reasonable, and committed

[1] MS. autograph letter of Brederode to De Witt, May 4. *Hague Archives.*

the minority to nothing. He was allowed to withdraw, and in a few minutes returned with the draft of the Act. Whether it was his own work, or adapted from what he had asked the English government to send him, is not known.

Thirteen votes were at once recorded in favor of the immediate extension of the Act, and five towns resisted, Alkmaar having joined itself to the four already named. The majority declared the resolution to be duly passed, and they ordered the Act to be extended and signed in duplicate, and sent to England by two separate routes on the following day. "And I trust," wrote De Witt, "that it is so framed that the liberty of this State will be preserved by it, and the demand of the Lord Protector fully met."[1] By this document the States of Holland bound themselves not to elect the Prince of Orange, or any of his line, stadtholder or admiral of their Province, and to resist the election of the same as captain-general of the army of the seven confederated Provinces.[2] A letter was at the same time approved of, instructing Beverning and Newport to make one more appeal to Cromwell, before the delivery of the Act, to forego his demand,[3] and De Witt, in a private letter to the ambassadors, put forward several reasons in favor of the appeal.[4]

It will probably never be possible to ascertain the amount of personal influence and intriguing which De Witt employed to carry this Act through the States of Holland. Many of his battles in political life were won by non-official conferences and intercourse. Calm, temperate, meeting passion and prejudice with reasoning and arguments, he invariably presented the views of his party in the form of a high state policy. He was a master of argument and strategy. Even in sending off the Act of Exclusion to Van Beverning and New-

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[1] MS. letter of De Witt to Beverning and Newport of May 5. *Hague Archives* (reproduced in Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 50). This letter of De Witt's, dated May 5, is our authority for the proceedings at the meeting of Monday, May 4.

[2] Resolutions of the States of Holland, May 4, 1654.

[3] Ibid., where the draft of the letter approved of by the States is given.

[4] Letter, De Witt to Beverning and Newport, May 5: Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 50.

port he furnished them with the materials of lulling such suspicions as might arise in their colleague Jongestal's mind at the arrival of an express despatch-boat from the States of Holland with despatches direct to the Holland nominees. A sham letter went over with the Act, which might be shown to Jongestal, to keep his suspicions down!

Chapter II.

MORE TRICKERY.—HOW THE EXCLUSION WAS DELIVERED TO CROMWELL.

Oliver proclaimed the peace before the Act of Exclusion reached England, and he did so under a renewed protest that if the Act was not delivered the treaty would be null and void. His proclamation of it was made on $\frac{\text{April 26,}}{\text{May 6.}}$ At Whitehall, on the morning of that day, twelve trumpeters blew their loudest blasts, after which four heralds, pompously arrayed, read the proclamation, in presence of Oliver himself, who, with some friends, attended the ceremony on horseback. The trumpeters and heralds then proceeded to Temple Bar, where they were met by the Lord Mayor in his civic robes, and by fourteen aldermen in their red official tabards. Again the trumpets blew, and the proclamation was read in Fleet Street, at St. Paul's Church-yard, and before the Exchange; and for many years no proclamation had been received with so much cheering by the people. The cannon of the Tower and of the ships in the Thames thundered forth their dread approval. At night the streets were ablaze with bonfires. All London was in jubilee, for the peace was popular. The ambassadors had tar-barrels burning in the river opposite their dwellings; and within-doors they were regaling their Dutch and English friends. Next day they themselves were entertained at a sumptuous banquet by Oliver, while the wives of the two of them who were married were entertained by Oliver's wife and daughter. There was much playing on the lute and other musical instruments during dinner; and after dinner they adjourned to the ladies' apartments, where there was more instrumental music. At last one of the company (Pickering) handed to Oliver a paper, which the latter read, and passed on

to the ambassadors, remarking, "We have hitherto exchanged many papers, but in my opinion this is the best." It was the first verse of Psalm cxxxiii., "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Then they sung the psalm solemnly, women and men all joining in it. They sung it in four parts, each taking the part that suited best his voice.[1]

"Behold how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together, such as brethren are,
In unity to dwell."

It was an age when men felt the significance of such things. The great Gustavus began the day of Lützen with "Luther's Hymn;" and now the great Oliver closed the Dutch war with the still living words of the Hebrew king.

The Dutch had deferred their publication of the peace until they should see with what manifestations of feeling the treaty was received in England, being resolved to take their cue accordingly. When they learned that it had been celebrated with loud demonstrations of joy in every great town in England, the little Republic broke instantly into bonfires, triumphal arches, flags, clanging of steeple-bells, and firing of cannon. Amsterdam was alight with blazing tar-barrels all the night long, and the excitement died away at last in thanksgiving services, which were held in all the churches.

The Act of Exclusion, after reaching Van Beverning and Newport, lay in their hands, unknown, as they thought, to Oliver, for nearly five weeks, while they vainly strove to induce him to dispense with it. The sly Oliver probably knew almost as soon as they did that the Act was passed; he probably knew, also, that it was in their possession, and that a little patient firmness would make it forth-coming. As a great quarrel immediately broke out between the Provinces on its becoming known that the States of Holland had passed such an Act,

[1] Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 927; and *Verbael*, p. 419. We do not know what metrical version was used on the occasion.

it could not possibly remain long concealed from him that the States had yielded to the management of De Witt.

The quarrel began by some of the Provinces in the States-General requiring Holland to disclose the nature of the private negotiation which was everywhere talked about. De Witt replied that nothing had been done which at all concerned the Generality or encroached upon its rights, or the terms of the Union, and that whatever had been done was a matter lying at the sovereign disposal of Holland. Thereupon followed all manner of entries in the minute-book of the States-General, daily discussions, notes, motions, opinions, and language violent or less violent, according to the leaning of the provinces. One paper given in by the deputies of Friesland was described by Holland (*i. e.*, by De Witt) as filled with false assertions, injurious invectives, shameless calumnies, unchristian imprecations, and language which civilized men never used toward each other.[1]

The story of a secret negotiation spread among the people in exaggerated forms. The two Princesses, the mother and grandmother of little William, wrote appealing letters to the States-General. Some of the Hollanders themselves began to waver; even the men of Dordrecht[2] faltered, gave way, and absented themselves from some of the meetings of the States of Holland—a circumstance which called forth a vehement remonstrance from De Witt.[3] It resulted in the States of Holland writing earnestly twice to Van Beverning and Newport, thanking them for not having delivered the Act, and requiring

[1] MS. Secret Resolutions of the States-General, May 18: "Onwaerachtige positiven, injurieuse invectiven, onbeschaemde calumnien en onchristelicke imprecatien."

[2] MS. De Witt to his father, March 20.

[3] MS. De Witt to his father, May 12. "Doch ick kan niet naerlaten hierbij te voegen, dat ick niet sonder excessive verwonderinge gesien hebbe, dat in een tydt in welcke de ruste en de vryheit van ons algemeene lieve vaderlandt sonder wys en voorsichtlich beleydt van cordate mannen evidentel. periclitecrde, de stadt van Dordrecht, die noyt in soodaenigen occasie plachte te failleren maer altyds boven anderen uit te steecken herwaerts aen heeft gesonden personen, die een ydel geluydt van naem van een kindt en de doode letter van een humbel geschrifte van twee weduw-vrouwe soo seer heeft connen intimideren, dat deselve schandelyck haer post hebben verlaeten en onaengesien iterative sommatien aen hen gedaen niet te bewegen syn geweest omme haer geordonneerde plaetse te connen waernemen."

them to redouble their efforts to dissuade Oliver from his demand for it.[1] Then the keener Orange provinces, finding the lips of Holland inexorably sealed, began to stir up the States-General to write to the ambassadors for an explanation of what had been done; and some even demanded their recall, that they might give personal reckoning of their conduct. Holland answered by dissuasions, intrigues, and arguments. On the main question it was dumb; but the secret was well enough known, and its delegates were compelled to listen to it, and even to talk about it in evasive, vague terms in the States-General.

A month had now been spent in this idle warfare of words —there was no promptness on the part of the outwitted Provinces; nothing but aimless tugging and wrangling, every one this way or that, but no clear, vigorous action. Tired and impatient, a majority of the Provinces then brought forward a resolution to write to the ambassadors for a copy of any instructions that Holland had sent them.[2] Again De Witt struck in with his diplomacy, and juggled. He wheedled the infirm deputies of the sister Provinces into delaying action till the following day, that he might report their determination to the States of Holland.[3] The infirm men yielded. The post was just closing for England, and De Witt, retiring from the States-General, dashed off a few hurried lines to Van Beverning and Newport, informing them of their high mightinesses' intended resolution, and significantly hoping that it would come too late.[4] Here was alacrity: a contrast to the vacillating States-General, and also trickery! In the afternoon De Witt reported the forenoon's resolution of that infirm body to the States of Holland, who instantly resolved, but only by a majority, that Van Beverning and Newport be ordered to put an end to the uncertainty by instantly obtaining

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[1] Resolutions of the States of Holland, May 10 and May 22. Secret Resolutions, pp. 143–145.

[2] MS. Secret Resolutions of the States-General. See proceedings of June 5 (taken in connection with those of June 2).

[3] MS. Resolutions of the States-General, June 5.

[4] MS. De Witt to Van Beverning and Newport, written in the afternoon of June 5 (*Hague Archives*); reprinted in Sypesteyn's *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 74.

from Oliver a renunciation of his demand or by immediately delivering to him the Act. At midnight De Witt was again writing to Van Beverning and Newport to make a short end of the work, and he inclosed the afternoon's resolution of the States of Holland.[1] The ordinary post, with De Witt's mid-day letter, was now some hours on its way.[2]

No one could foresee what the States-General might order on the morrow. At present they were merely proposing to ask from the ambassadors a copy of the clandestine proceedings, and there had been talk of recalling them to report personally. To-morrow they might forbid delivery of the Act, or recall the ambassadors. With the ink scarcely dry on De Witt's midnight letter, that and the formal resolution of the States of Holland passed in the afternoon were hurried off by an express boat to England in the middle of the night. Let the States-General sleep on, unconscious, in their pleasant slumbers! When the bright June dawn steals over the heavens, the vessel will be creeping in silence beyond the muddy-green waters of the Maas; and by their hour of meeting next forenoon the low sand-hills of Holland will be lost to sight.

The States of Holland, at the following meeting of the States-General,[3] did not attempt to conceal the despatch of an express to England, but they concealed and partly misrepresented the character of the message it carried. They told the States-General that they had reinstructed the ambassadors to "use extreme efforts to induce Oliver to be satisfied with the 'temperament;'" and they concealed the instruction that, if they failed, they were at once to deliver the Exclusion.[4] The former half of the message from the States of Holland to

[1] Resolutions of States of Holland, June 5; also MS. De Witt to Beverning and Newport, dated midnight, June 5 (*Hague Archives*), reprinted in Sypesteyn's *Bijdr. bijl.* p. 78. From De Witt's letter it appears that three towns of the minority (Haarlem, Leyden, and Enckhuysen) wanted the whole negotiation to be explained to the States-General; two (Schoonhoven and Hoorn) merely wished further efforts to be made to get Oliver to dispense with the Act; and one (Alkmaar) was positively hostile. Three were not represented at the meeting.

[2] MS. Midnight letter of June 5 referred to.

[3] Next day, June 6.

[4] See instruction to the deputies in Resolutions of States of Holland, June 5, which gives them the cue what to say.

Beverning and Newport was converted into an argument by De Witt for the States-General not taking the action they contemplated. But the States-General was for once firm, and passed the resolution.[1] Still De Witt did not retire altogether discomfited. As was generally the case with him, he gained something which was of importance to his cause: he gained a little more delay, professedly under the pretence of reporting this final resolution to the afternoon meeting of the States of Holland, that they might have a last opportunity of considering what they would do, but really to give the express boat several hours' longer start. The States of Holland, at their afternoon meeting, showed no symptom of retiring from their position; they spoke in higher terms than they had yet employed, and declared the resolution of the States-General null and void, and an encroachment on the sovereign rights of Holland; but at the same time they authorized Van Beverning and Newport to comply with the wish of the States-General and send to that body a copy of the Act.[2] This was a friendly arrangement on the part of De Witt for the purpose of relieving the two ambassadors from the dilemma of either obeying without the sanction of Holland or disobeying the resolution of the States-General. But during the few hours' delay thus obtained, the busy, fertile brain of Holland's skilful minister was concocting a deeper and subtler scheme than he had yet played. It was another trick, exceedingly clever, but somewhat undignified.

The same evening, apparently about nine o'clock, the States-General reassembled to hear the determination of Holland. The resolution of the interval was communicated to them, except that portion which authorized Van Beverning and Newport to furnish the States-General with the copy of the Act. The States-General met the inflexibility of Holland by equal firmness, and adhered to their resolution of the forenoon.[3]

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[1] MS. Resolutions of States-General, June 6.

[2] Resolutions of States of Holland, June 6, MS. draft letter thereby approved of to Beverning and Newport.

[3] MS. Further Resolution of States-General, June 6, adopted at this evening meeting.

And now De Witt's master-trick came into play. He persuaded the States-General, or their secretary, not to send the resolution to the ambassadors in ordinary writing, but in cipher; and having accomplished this, he cunningly retired and wrote a letter in triplicate (so that there might be no possibility of failure) to Van Beverning and Newport in the ordinary character, communicating the resolution of the States-General, transmitting the instructions of Holland of the same afternoon, and repeating his significant hint of the previous midnight, that the Act would, of course, be no longer in their possession.[1] De Witt's object was, that if the Act was still undelivered, Beverning, discovering at a glance from his easily read letter what the States of Holland wanted, might steal out and place the Act in Oliver's hands while the official letter and resolution of the States-General were being slowly deciphered. Another express boat was accordingly despatched to England the same evening with the order of the States-General, the resolution of Holland, and with the three copies of De Witt's private letter. There were now three despatch-boats speeding their way to England across the narrow sea, Holland's two being far ahead. And in the way which De Witt contemplated, the Act was delivered to Oliver. While the clerk of the ambassadors was painfully plodding through the Arabic numerals under which the wishes of the States-General were concealed, and spelling the letters and words slowly out by means of his key, Beverning (perhaps Newport accompanied him)[2] quietly withdrew and put Oliver in possession of the Act.

[1] MS. letter of June 6, De Witt to Beverning and Newport. It explains De Witt's object in getting the proceedings of the States-General sent in cipher (*Hague Archives*); also Sypesteyn's *Bijdr. bijl.* p. 80, where the letter is printed.

[2] MS. De Witt to Brederode, July 3 (*Hague Archives*). From this letter we learn that Beverning's letter to De Witt of the 12th did not make it clear how the Act of Exclusion had been delivered to Oliver. Accordingly, De Witt wrote for information, and Beverning replied, on June 27, that the ambassadors, after repeated and futile efforts to get the Protector to desist from his demand, delivered to him the Act with a Latin translation of the same, whereupon Oliver retired into another apartment to examine it, in the full Council of State as the ambassadors were informed, and after half an hour Oliver again came in, and expressed his satisfaction, thanking, through the ambassadors, the States of Holland very heartily (*officieuslyck*).

There was no necessity for all this machinery of trick and stratagem. The States-General had merely asked for a copy of the Act without prohibiting its delivery, whereas De Witt's device was designed to outwit a resolution that would forbid delivery. But the stratagem reveals the tendency, strong at all times within him, to cover himself and his party with a superfluity of precautions.

Chapter III.

THE ACT OF EXCLUSION ASSAILED.

The copy of the Act was duly forwarded by Beverning and Newport to the States-General. This luckless body had all along wanted a man to guide it, and, the Act being now delivered, it found itself helpless. It fell away into months of renewed wrangling and aimless, idle recrimination. The Confederacy wanted cohesion. Two of the States were rent by domestic broils, and in one of them there were two bodies both claiming to be the assembly of the Province. Some of the States were deficient in straightforwardness, talking high-sounding loyalty to the House of Orange while they perpetrated little provincial tyrannies against the Prince.[1] The pensionaries, the legal mouth-pieces of the Provinces, had to write State papers against this action of Holland which the most enterprising of Englishmen will find it a task in these days to peruse. One thing some of the Provinces did, and it touched De Witt keenly. Just at the moment when all the Dutch world was believing that Van Beverning's splendid diplomacy had triumphed over Oliver, and induced him to accept the "temperament," just at the time when the States-General was about to ratify the treaty under that belief, the Treasurer-Generalship of the Union became vacant, and Van Beverning, through the influence of De Witt, was carried, with loud acclaim, and as it were shoulder-high, into the office as a reward for his achievement. When the hoax was laid bare, Zealand came forward, and, while advocating that the education of the young Prince should be undertaken by the State, withdrew the consent to Van Beverning's appointment, which

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 935.

it had given under false impressions. Friesland (where Prince William's influence predominated) followed it up, denouncing him as a public offender against the State, and moving that he be not allowed to exercise any office pertaining to the Generality until he had rendered an account of his conduct. Utrecht insisted on the recall of the ambassadors, and Groningen declared for annulling the Act of Exclusion in a practical manner by appointing the Prince to the high offices held by his forefathers. The States of Holland stood by their colleague, and defended his public character; but Van Beverning was not permitted to exercise the office of Treasurer-General for several years.

In those days also Prince William came from Friesland to the Hague. He had neither the brain nor the energy to lead the Orange party; and the old dowager—shrewd old lady—had for some years suspected him of striving to further his own interests at the expense of the little Prince. His presence and influence in the Hague gave new courage and zeal to the satellites of the noble House, but he was incapable of suggesting to the supporters of the House a united course of action. The two Princesses and he headed a conspiracy with the view of stirring up the Orange party in the several Provinces to designate at once the little Prince as stadtholder and captain-general. The jealous old Princess, however, would not hear of a lieutenant-general being appointed during his minority, and this was a blow aimed at the Frisian Prince. A letter had been prepared for circulation among the friends of the House throughout the Provinces, when De Witt, through his spies "at court," discovered the plot, stepped in with a friendly resolution of the States of Holland, which prevented the letter from being sent out, and brought the intrigue to an end.[1]

Simultaneously with this plot Zealand began to prepare, under oath of secrecy, a ponderous argument against the Act of Exclusion.[2] The oath of secrecy did not keep the proceeding concealed from De Witt, who immediately made it known to

[1] MS. De Witt to Beverning and Newport, June 26 (*Hague Archives*). Resolution of States of Holland, June 20.

[2] MS. letter, De Witt to Beverning and Newport, June 26.

Beverning and Newport in England. Strangely enough, almost by return of the express boat came a letter from Oliver to the States of Zealand—a friendly, persuasive letter. Had De Witt suggested this? It is not improbable that either he or Beverning had.[1] It was an earnest and outspoken document. Oliver lamented that so many people in the Provinces were striving to undo the security which the treaty and the Act of Exclusion by Holland had given him—the end of all which could only be to reopen the war, and probably to uproot from both countries the pure religion. The latter remark had a special meaning for Zealand, whose loud-voiced clergy and elaborate pensionaries had always thundered against Jesuitism and Spain. The former was a significant hint to the Orange party. De Witt describes it as creating some consternation among the rulers in Zealand and irritation among the community. The Orangemen declared that it had been fabricated by the Hollanders—another phase of the all-distrusting spirit of the times."[2]

For a time the discussion went on fiercely in the little Republic. The elaborate pensionaries rolled out their arguments written and spoken against the Act; the States-General listened to their rotund, full-mouthed thunder or "sweet eloquence" (to use De Witt's ironical phrase),[3] as the case might be, and did nothing. Its poor paralytic arms hung helplessly from its shoulders with no stroke in them. Zealand, after the due period of gestation, brought forth its ponderous argument, and definitely accompanied it with a proposal that the States-General should take upon themselves the education of the young Prince. Unfortunately for the Orange cause, each

[1] De Witt's chief clerk, who was bribed by Prince William of Friesland, and who was tried and punished for his breach of duty, states this distinctly in a memorandum by him while in prison. But some of the statements in this memorandum are mere inferences by the prisoner, and not actual statements of fact; and they may, therefore, be wrong. In reference to Cromwell's letter to Zealand, the prisoner says that De Witt instigated Beverning and Newport to get Oliver to write the letter. Sypesteyn's *Geschiedkundige Bijdragen*, tweede afl. p. 103.

[2] MS. De Witt to Beverning and Newport, July 6; and De Witt to Beverning, of same date (*Hague Archives*); Aitzema, *Saken van Staat*, iii. p. 935.

[3] MS. De Witt to his father, May 12 (*Hague Archives*), "Soete welsprekenheyt."

Province had its special patent medicine, and none would allow the Republic to swallow any prescription save its own.

The pensionaries had struck out a line of argument which De Witt owns he could not answer.[1] Cromwell, they said, had made a public treaty with the States-General, about whose terms there was no dispute, and he could not break it, so long as the States-General fulfilled their obligations under it, without becoming a "bond-breaker" and violator of the public faith. And there could be no answer to this argument, for Oliver's position was as false as De Witt's. They also urged that if it was true, as the States of Holland alleged, that they had made no preliminary promise to Cromwell to grant an Act of Exclusion, he was bound by the treaty toward the States of Holland also, since no expectation on his part would constitute an obligation upon them. And further, if such an Act of Exclusion was part of the treaty, the States-General really did not know whether they had a treaty with England or not, because if the States of Holland chose at any time, in virtue of their provincial sovereignty, to violate the Act of Exclusion, the treaty would fall away, and the other Provinces would be deprived of its benefit without having any just complaint against Holland. And finally, they contended that the relations of the States-General with England were made to depend absolutely on the will of Holland. De Witt might well spend days as he did in trying to circumvent these reasons. They were unassailable so long as the terms of the Union between the Provinces remained what they were.

The pamphleteers, divided into rival camps—adherents of Holland and adherents of Orange—were fierce in their invectives against each other. The dispute also passed on into the non-writing community. The little shopkeeper and laborer, the clever artisan of the towns, and rustic Jan Klaus and his wife, who brought up their turf, or butter, or cheese by the canal-boats to market, and would have died for the little Prince, all sat in judgment upon the Act of Holland. The ignorant

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[1] MS. De Witt to Van Beverning and Newport, May 13 (*Hague Archives*); reproduced in Sypesteyn, *Bijdragen, bijl.* p. 64–66.

mass of the people saw no constitutional principle involved in the dispute. They only saw that certain men who touched not their love, who lived among themselves like common citizens, and were the subject of scandal like common people, had clubbed together to keep the little Prince out of his "rights." And of these men the central and main figure was the Pensionary of Holland, the inheritor from his father (prisoner of Louvesteyn) of hostility and hatred to the House of Orange. Jan Klaus and his wife, in their rustic cottage, away among the ditches and the flat green meadows, and Hans cobbling in his cellar in the towns, were alike filled with bitter indignation and burning hatred against the persecutors of the unoffending and worshipped little Prince. Hans's day of retribution will come. Meanwhile the odium gathered; and as, day by day, the great figure of De Witt rose beyond all his contemporaries, and men marked him to be the sole Dutchman of his time, so day by day, round him alone, gathered the clouds of doom.[1]

But De Witt did not leave the battle to pamphleteers, nor did he allow the sonorous pensionaries to roll their swelling declamations unanswered over the land. With the sanction and in the name of his own States, he stepped forth with a justification of the proceedings of Holland. During all the hot July, late and early, it was streaming from his pen.[2] Portions of it went over weekly to England for revision by Beverning, that the details might be stated "according to truth." A committee of the States of Holland was appointed to revise it.[3] It was meant to be the first and last public answer of the

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 1110. "The fire of discord" (writes Aitzema, who was living in the Hague, and saw it all) "began again to burn; people talked very freely; a certain courtling" (of the House of Orange) "declared at table, in a public hotel, that the exclusion was treason; that the concoctors of it were traitors, that the necks of two or three of them should be broken, and that by-and-by that would certainly be their fate. On wagons and in canal-boats the matter was most odiously represented." Fell prophecy, when the times were ripe, of what was to come!

[2] MS. letters from De Witt to Beverning, and to Beverning and Newport, July 17 and 31. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. letter, De Witt to Beverning and Newport, July 24. *Hague Archives.*

States of Holland to the resounding thunder of the municipal functionaries and the crude criticisms of the people. It was also intended by De Witt to be an appeal to the public opinion of Europe[1] and to the judgment of posterity when the little Orange conflict that so painfully rent the Provinces should have passed away. It was the most elaborate State-paper he ever wrote; and, from the home rule point of view, a masterly defence of the doctrines of Holland, and a great political and judicial onslaught on the claims of the House of Orange.

One plot of Prince William of Friesland (for some time a Prince of the Empire) had been dissipated by De Witt,[2] and knowledge of another now reached him in August from England (probably through Oliver's spies), that the same Prince had designs of a less peaceful sort. De Witt proceeded mole-like, and in underground ways, to garrison the Hague with some companies of soldiers under trusted officers. But there was nothing of the demagogue in him. The real object was hidden from the public, and a false reason was given out for the entrance of the troops. The Hague happened to be full of half-mutinous soldiers who had returned from Brazil, where the Dutch this year had lost all their possessions, and the public were told that the troops were introduced to protect the town from the disorderliness of these mutinous and unpaid bands.[3] The Prince had certainly, in this month of July or August, begun a tour through the north quarter of the province of Holland, and alarming accounts came down to the Hague of the language he had addressed to the town councils of the North Holland towns. Amsterdam, as a precaution, strengthened its companies of soldiers by new enlistments; guards were posted round the town, and at every point where ships or boats entered;[4] and the herring-fishing town of Enckhuysen was warned to be on its guard. A company of horse was

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[1] He had it translated into Latin—perhaps into other languages also, and circulated throughout Europe. MS. De Witt to Professor Thysius, "Professor Eloquentiæ" at Leyden, August 12. *Hague Archives.*

[2] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 1110.

[3] MS. De Witt to Beverning and Newport, August 14. *Hague Archives.*

[4] MS. De Witt to Beverning, August 14. MS. De Witt to ditto, August 28.

ordered into Delft. Prince William's regiment, which was lying at Dort, was ordered out of the town, and soldiers more trusted were introduced.[1] The end of all these movements was now obvious; and the time for dissimulation being past, De Witt boldly owned, in answer to the deputies of Friesland, that the cause of the removal of the Prince's regiment from Dort was suspicion of the Prince.[2] De Witt wrote also to friends in North Holland for authentic information as to the Prince's proceedings,[3] and found that gossip had greatly exaggerated the Prince's speech.[4]

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[1] Among them was the company of our old acquaintance, Dolman. MS. De Witt to Beverning, August 14.

[2] MS. De Witt to Beverning, August 28. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. De Witt to various persons in North Holland, August 28. *Hague Archives.*

[4] MS. De Witt to Van Obdam, September 11. *Hague Archives.*

Chapter IV.

DE WITT'S DEFENCE.

In this great manifesto in favor of cantonal government or provincial home rule, the chief characteristics are the absolute passionlessness of its logic, and the singular ripeness of the author's republican doctrines. There is not an offensive word, nor a trace of temper, throughout the calm, remorseless flow of its reasoning. It is as passionless as a demonstration in Euclid, and it was all the more crushing from the terrible imperturbability and sometimes lofty eloquence of its words. In the want of positive knowledge about De Witt's personal idiosyncrasies, we have probably in it a hint of his method of dealing with his opponents—moderation of tone in the fiercest passages of debate, self-control amidst the severest temptations to invective; the politest courtesy in place of vituperation; coolness, with tact; and arguments addressed to the reason and good sense of men.

His first position stated the nature of the bond or union into which the Provinces had entered. It was that the Provinces were an agglomeration of sovereign and independent republics. They had been utterly independent of each other before the Union; and all that each Province had done by the Treaty of Union was to divest itself of a certain portion of its sovereignty, and hand it over to a body called the States-General. But whatever the Province had not so transferred, it still retained. The States-General could not legally have more power than the written document creating that body invested it with, or than was granted by any subsequent agreement altering or amending the document. The Provinces were bound to each other by the contract they had entered

into, and no further. The argument thus put was incontrovertible, and it fairly stated the nature of the confederation.[1]

He next maintained that the right of electing stadtholders for the respective Provinces, or of choosing a captain-general for the Union, had never been delegated to the States-General. This was equally true; and he showed that, since the date of the Deed of Union which had been appealed to, several Acts of Exclusion had taken place. Holland, he said, had abjured Philip two years after the Union, although none of the Provinces would consent to it, and some time later it excluded the Duke of Anjou from all offices in its gift.

When each Province abjured its lord (Philip), by whatever title he might be called, its lord's rights fell to that Province, and not to the States-General. Philip's right of appointing stadtholders became a purely provincial right, with the exercise of which no other Province, or combination of Provinces, could interfere; and his right of appointing a captain-general —there being no stipulations in the Union on the subject— was one to be exercised, or not exercised, as the Provinces jointly and unanimously might determine.

If each Province was left free to elect, or not to elect, a stadtholder and a captain-general as it chose, it was also free to reject positively, or positively to exclude, such functionaries, so far as it was concerned, and that without communicating its intentions to, or consulting with, other Provinces.

Up to this point De Witt's position was impregnable under the Union. The other question remained: Could any individual Province, ignoring the States-General, negotiate in reference to a purely provincial right with a foreign Power?

De Witt answered, "Yes;"[2] and he founded, as his opponents did, on the tenth article of the Union, and on the practice of the respective Provinces since the foundation of the Union. He defined the "confederations" or "treaties" which the individual Provinces were prohibited by the tenth article of the Union from entering into, to mean treaties of offence or defence, and the like. Between these, he argued, and the

[1] *Deductie*, cap. ii. and v.

[2] Ibid. cap. v.

naked resolution passed by Holland there was no similarity or connection. He appealed to the conduct of the founders of the Union themselves, who ought to know what they meant by the article in question, and he showed that the founders of the Union had acted upon his view of the clause; and that nearly every one of the seven Provinces had systematically and constantly based their practice upon his interpretation.[1]

He next showed that no Province was bound to communicate, and that, in fact, the framers of the Union, long after it had come into force, did not communicate any such separate permissible negotiations with foreign potentates, to other members of the Union;"[2] that it was even competent and in accordance with the practice of the founders of the Union, and their contemporaries, long after the Union had been entered into, to make use of ministers of the States-General to negotiate purely provincial business with the foreign Powers to whom they happened to be accredited;[3] that it was lawful for each individual Province to contribute, apart and separately, what it could to the furtherance of peace with other lands, without communication with its allies under the Union;[4] and that the passing of the Act of Exclusion was not opposed to any resolution of the States-General.[5]

Holland, in resolving never again to take any member of the House of Orange into its employment, had done infinitely less than the very founders and framers of the Union had done; infinitely less than Friesland and Gelderland had done, who had, without consent of the others, offered the crown of the United Provinces to France; infinitely less than other Provinces had done; infinitely less than Prince Frederick Henry of Orange had done only eight years previously; infinitely less than his Princess had done; and infinitely less than his son had done when he came into power—each of whom had made secret treaties with and accepted large benefits from Spain—the public enemy of the State. And yet in none of these instances had there been any complaint that the Union

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[1] *Deductie*, cap. v. [2] Ibid. cap. vi. [3] Ibid. cap. vii.
[4] Ibid. cap. viii. [5] Ibid. cap. ix.

had been violated. Holland, which had borne by far the greatest portion of the cost of the wars with Spain and England, which had made so many money sacrifices on behalf of a number of the Provinces, which had striven so faithfully for the maintenance of the common alliance and the common weal —had, said De Witt, a well-grounded cause of complaint that its acts should be singled out for condemnation, when the acts of others, of more considerable moment and consequence to the State, were approved of and passed. What the founders of the Union did daily without scruple, might, he thought, be done by Holland without blame.

But, said De Witt—and here he turned the subtlety of himself and the cabal to good account—Holland had not negotiated with Cromwell; it had given no instruction to any of the ambassadors previous to the ratification of the treaty (No! because Holland was in profound ignorance of De Witt's clandestine work); it had not acted in opposition to the spirit or letter of the treaty; it had merely, in virtue of its sovereign power, passed a resolution to aid in securing for the States-General, under critical circumstances, the treaty which that body had made. This would have been sophistry had the practice of the Union been against Holland, and had Holland inspired De Witt's intrigues; but the practice being all in favor of Holland, and Holland itself being duped, there was no answer to it within the four corners of the parchment which bound the Provinces together.

In the manifestoes of some of the Orange Provinces it had been asserted broadly that the Act of Exclusion conflicted with the "dearly won freedom," and it had been delicately insinuated that the little Prince, by right of birth, was entitled to inherit the offices which his father had filled. It was in answering these that the round and full completeness of De Witt's republican theory became apparent. The freedom of the State in general, he declared, and the freedom of Holland in particular, were treasured by the States of that Province "even as the apple of their eye," but they could not comprehend that it could be a sign and token of true lovers (*liebhebbers ende zelateurs*) of freedom to maintain that in a common-

wealth the highest dignities should go to any one by mere right of birth. They could not understand that such a transmission of the high offices of the State could be even named freedom. On the contrary, in a Republic, the highest offices could not be conferred on those whose parents had previously held them, without the greatest danger to freedom; and experience taught that "all the Republics of the whole world, not one excepted, which had lent themselves in the slightest to that maxim or custom—yea, even almost all those which had only intrusted the might of the State to one person for life, and many who had intrusted it to one man for a long period, had been brought under subjection, and reduced to a state of Monarchy."[1]

"Their Noble Great Mightinesses" of Holland "entreat the other Provinces to consider justly the chief effects and most notable fruits of true freedom and stainless liberty, which consists in this, according to the judgment of their Noble Great Mightinesses and the unanimous opinion of all political writers, that the highest dignities stand open to virtue; and that as much should never be deferred to possessions, family connections, qualities of ancestors, or other adjuncts of fortune, as to the piety, capacity, and merits of men themselves. So have all well-established Republics—at least so long as they have kept themselves in any sense uncorrupted—and so especially have their Noble Great Mightinesses" of Holland "held the nobleness of distinguished houses and illustrious families in good consideration, but they have never laid the same in the balance with the nobleness of the men themselves who should be called to the government of the Republic. And therefore is it rightly said by judicious men that the children and descendants of great princes and heroes are not those who spring from their loins, and, according to municipal law, inherit their temporal possessions, but those who are truly the issue of their souls, and who, following in their footsteps, show, in fact, that they inherit in reality the eternal treasure, namely, the virtues, of the same great princes and heroes."[2]

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[1] *Deductie*, cap. i. §§ 9, 10.

[2] Ibid. ii. cap. v. §§ 1, 2, 3.

De Witt defended the Act against the accusation that it implied pusillanimity, and was humiliating to the State. In this he was less successful. One of the most loudly-urged arguments of the Orange party was that the Act led to discord and disruption in the State, and that the seven confederated Provinces would never experience internal tranquillity unless an eminent or princely head was appointed to conduct their common business. His chief reply to this was that the greatest dangers which the liberties of the provinces had ever encountered sprung from so-called eminent heads, as witness the eternal dissensions and savage wars in olden times of the dukes, counts, bishops, and lords; witness the doings of the House of Burgundy, the Emperor Charles and King Philip; the jealousy of some nobles against William of Orange (the Silent); and their secret negotiations with the Archduke Matthias. Witness the combustion created by the Duke of Anjou, witness the French fury of his time; the confusion introduced by Governor-General Leicester, "province being set against province, town against town, subject against magistrate; with discord, dissension, disruption, and the beginnings of civil war. And of later noble heads" (alluding to Maurice and the last Prince of Orange), "we have the example still before our eyes."

"Heads of quality," he says, "have oftentimes their own private interests to forward, differing from the interests of the State, yea sometimes in direct contradiction to the common weal; and these same heads, having always a great following and great weight in the government, it is not conceivable, it is even impossible (unless they could draw the human nature out of themselves), that the said eminent heads should not at some time or other seek to further their private interest, and to work it out by the support they find in the government;[1] against which, all upright members of the government, who have their eye fixed on the common weal above all, and hold the welfare of the people to be the highest law, regarding more the approval of their conscience than the au-

[1] *Deductie*, cap. iii. § 6.

thority of such eminent head, are constrained to set themselves to the utmost of their power. And behold, thereby the Republic is immediately in discord; on the one side is the eminent head who is not willing, or, according to the rules of the world, not able to yield, judging his respect and authority to be engaged; and on the other side are the upright members of government, who, resting on the approval of their consciences as on a metal wall, are not able to retire from their position. Behold, therein, the Republic in a state of dangerous rupture. And if the eminent head is of a violent humor or capable of being led on by violent counsellors, behold the Republic in the last extremity."[1]

Again:

"Have not the present seven united Provinces one and the same interest in their own preservation, one and the same fear of all foreign Powers? Are they not by alliances between themselves, by marriages both of the members of the government and of the inhabitants, by intercourse, commercial companies and other interests, so joined to each other, yea, so knotted and plaited into each other, that it is almost impossible to tear them asunder without excessive violence, which excessive violence cannot happen so long as there is no eminent head? Have they not a constantly sitting assembly of ambassadors or mandatories which we name the meeting of the States-General, through whom all the weighty business of war by sea or land is managed by common agreement, by whom alliances and confederations are made with kings, republics, princes, and potentates? Have they not common subordinate boards to manage all marine affairs and their common conquests? And, above all, are their hearts and souls not united and bound together by the spiritual and godly bond of one and the same religion? These are, according to the judgment of their Noble Great Mightinesses" of Holland, "the true bonds which must tie together the seven darts, and hold them fast in the claws of one and the same lion. And all this being well and sacredly preserved, and every one

[1] *Deductie*, ii. cap. iii. § 6.

contributing according to his duty and power to strengthen the same more and more, so shall we undoubtedly, under God's blessing, find that the Union will rest more firmly and surely on assemblies and boards which never die, than on the external pomp and authority of mortal men, and that liberty and freedom is more secure in the keeping of many good men, to whom originally and according to the privileges of the land its preservation is intrusted, than in the hands of one person called in to take charge of it, but on whom the same good men at all times have kept, and still must keep, a watchful eye."[1]

We have passed over many minor arguments which he advanced with the view of leaving unanswered no objection which had been urged by the Orange advocates. His last great plea was in reply to the charge of ingratitude to the House of Orange brought against Holland. He showed that since the death of William the Silent the small united Republics had paid to the Princes Maurice, Frederick Henry, and William II., in the form of salaries and gifts, the sum, enormous in those days, of two millions of pounds sterling, besides granting them exemption from taxation. He delivered a panegyric on William the Silent, and declared that if there ever was a time when gratitude should have been shown to the descendants of that "illustrious hero," it was when he fell beneath the blow of the assassin. But he was no sooner murdered than the States of Friesland, who now clamored so loudly about gratitude, passed over his young son Maurice—virtually excluded him, as De Witt put it—and appointed Count William Louis to the Frisian offices held by the murdered Prince.

"How dare these men cry out 'that the bones of the incomparable hero lying buried at Delft under a tomb erected by the State itself to his honor, and as a perpetual memorial for services inconceivable, and which no reward will repay, are calling aloud for vengeance to the high heaven,' because of the ingratitude of Holland, as they call it, to his great-

[1] *Deductie*, cap. iii. §§ 15, 16.

grandson? Should they not rather fear that the blood of the murdered Prince has called to God in the high heaven for vengeance against their own ancestors and their descendants, for these same ancestors having committed toward the murdered Prince's own son that which, with respect to his great-grandson merely, they describe as such unheard-of ingratitude? Surely they appear to pronounce their own condemnation, and to pray that Heaven would heap coals of fire on their own heads. Let these men now appeal to their own judgment and their own consciences, and say if it is possible to justify their own conduct: the son, the full-grown son of the great hero, they have without any ingratitude excluded from the dignities which his dead father had clothed; and yet Holland is not to be able to exclude a child three years old from the same dignities because the same hero was his great-grandfather! It is to be a lawful thing, and it may happen without any ingratitude, that a son of him who so marvellously had helped to further the liberty of the State, and who sealed his glorious actions with his blood, can be excluded; but it is not to be a lawful thing, and it may not happen without notorious ingratitude that a son is to be excluded of him who brought the State into such sad and dangerous confusion.[1] If, farther, the eye is turned toward the other Provinces . . . not one of them all will be found free of ingratitude except only the provinces of Holland and Zealand; but there is this difference between Friesland and the other Provinces, that all the others have finally conferred on the said Prince Maurice, or at least on the descendants of the said murdered Prince, all the dignities held by him; whereas in the Province of Friesland his line to this hour remains excluded.[2] Moreover, it does appear strange to their High Mightinesses (of Holland) that, shortly after the death of the last Prince of Orange, the Province of Groningen excluded the present little Prince from the high offices of that Province," by electing the Stadtholder of Friesland its stadtholder also, "and it was never accused by any one of ingratitude; yea, that even those who

[1] *Deductie*, ii. cap. vi. §§ 12, 13.

[2] Ibid. ii. § 14.

now cry the loudest," *e. g.*, Prince William of Friesland, and his following, "co-operated to bring about the same exclusion."[1]

Since the parchment made no provision whatever, either for or against, or relating to the appointment of stadtholders or captains-general, impartial men must admit that it was competent to Holland to pass the Act of Exclusion. And since the whole practice of the Provinces, from the hour when the parchment which constituted the Union was signed, was in favor of individual Provinces conducting certain negotiations with foreign Powers—even some of them had conducted negotiations affecting the most vital interests of the Confederation, without being found fault with—it seems equally impossible to accuse Holland of violating the Union by merely delivering its own resolution to Cromwell. The argument narrows itself into the sole question of the right of Holland, not to pass the Act, for that must remain indisputable, but to deliver it to a foreign potentate. Had the other Provinces throughout the course of the Union acted on the interpretation they now set up, it would be impossible to accept an interpretation of Holland, which had escaped the founders of the Union and their successors for seventy years. As regards Holland, therefore, let us candidly fix the blame in the right quarter, and lay it on the imperfectness of the written document. It was a poor makeshift—all, however, that was possible at the moment when it was framed. It created the conception of a central governing body—the States-General; but it left the conception of local independence in full vigor. Collision between the two principles was unavoidable; and as the long war with Spain nursed the idea of a completer union—such a union as would reduce local independence within limits which would leave the central body sovereign in all things relating to international action—the people's gratitude and love declared that that union was not to be accomplished through a States-General, but by the House of Orange.

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[1] *Deductie*, § 16.

On the other hand, as regards De Witt, it was he, and not Holland, who had violated the Union by inducing the States-General and the States of Holland themselves, by means of false pretences, to agree to this treaty; and in a constitutional country he would have been impeached for his conduct. The Justification was a defence of Holland, not of De Witt.

Chapter V.

CHARACTER OF DE WITT AND HIS WORK.

This Justification had been thrown like a charm into a seething caldron of political strife. Its first effect was to evoke official replies, and a cloud of anonymous pamphlets assailing and defending it. The clergy had already mutinied in some of the Provinces, and even in Friesland, where Prince William ruled as stadtholder, had begun, contrary to established usage, to pray for the little Prince in the Hague. In Zealand the small parochial office-hunters still intrigued. The men on the hard "asses' bench" greedily coveted the comforts of the municipal cushion, and the offices that pertained to it; while those on the cushion struggled to keep what they had. Both mixed up with the municipal scramble their theories of a government with or without a House of Orange. In Overyssel, which had split, through a quarrel over an election to a local office, into two sections, each claiming to be the governing authority of the Province, one attached itself to the maxims of Holland, and were smiled upon by the great Province; the other proclaimed the little Prince as stadtholder, demanded his appointment as captain-general, and found favor with those who supported the princely family. The Province was on the brink of civil war, and its six confederates seemed to be on the point of taking sides in the quarrel, according to their political bias. By degrees, during the autumn, the agitation throughout the whole seven Provinces began to die away. The charm was working, but more than the charm wrought the steadfast attitude of Holland. Both the charm and this unyielding front were the work of De Witt. More than once the towns of Holland appear to have quailed before the storm that was raging all over the little confederation.

De Witt's inflexible soul would neither quail nor yield. The strong man gave strength; the majority of the Holland towns rallied round him, and, drawing inspiration from him, they clung with true Dutch tenacity to the maxims they professed.

The victory was gained for De Witt, when near the close of the year the Pensionary of Zealand was constrained to declare, in the face of the hopelessness of the agitation: "I am of opinion that we must let the child and the whole business sleep, and I shall endeavor to bring this about." The restless, scheming politicians who were the champions of the interests of the noble House lost heart. At times they might bestir themselves, and Etna might still rock, yet each heave of the social volcano told them that the day of their ascendency was over till the young Prince should be fit for public life. Thus the maxims of Holland triumphed, and they were to rule the confederation for seventeen years. De Witt saw clearly that if he and his Province could ride securely through the tempest which the Act of Exclusion awakened, the ascendency of his political principles was assured. To his tenacity, to his steersmanship, to his cunning and casuistry, and to his boldness and his promptness to act, the first stadtholderless government of the United Provinces owed, at this crisis, its existence.

He did not, however, cease to be watchful because he had been victorious. He was born a strategist, as we have more than once said; and he seized every occasion to marshal his men, and give compactness to his party. We cannot measure the secret personal influence he exerted at the annual change of the magistracy, the so-called municipal "sovereigns" either of the towns of Holland or of some of the greater provinces. We can trace him once working keenly in subterranean channels to obtain the appointment of a staunch believer in the principles of his party, to the office of pensionary of the town of Haarlem, vacant this year by the death of the local functionary. And when a retiring burgomaster, according to the routine, was laying aside his official tabard and entering upon another function, De Witt was greatly "troubled" at the prospect of losing the support of a steady adherent, and entreated

him to arrange so that the Assembly of the province should not be deprived of his aid. "I shall not place before your nobleness's eyes," he writes, "that the time now stands before the door, yea, is already born, when by zeal, good management, constancy and courage on the part of the honest and true-hearted rulers, with the help of God Almighty, our dear father-land can be brought into a state of freedom, which we and our posterity, under God's blessing, shall be able to enjoy in peace and tranquillity for long years to come." To succeed in enthroning that thing which he here and always calls freedom—and which meant the domination of the oligarchy of Holland, unrestrained by the House of Orange, untempered by the democracy, and untrammelled by the smaller Provinces—De Witt felt that the first necessity was to have the Government of Holland manned with staunch believers in the maxims of the province. His aim, therefore, was to strengthen the party in every town to which his influence extended, and to convert the States of Holland into a phalanx of devoted followers, solid and courageous, and resolved to give their principles the fullest embodiment.

In this way De Witt carried the principles which, at his entrance on public life, he had found in complete working force, to a clearly victorious result. He had not created them; he had not even established them; but, finding them around him at work, he confirmed their supremacy, and secured for them a long triumph. What he did was done with great talent, singular fertility of resource, unshrinking boldness, iron inflexibility, and marvellous reticence; that is, the *manner* of doing the thing was admirable. But the intrinsic value of the thing thus skilfully done takes us into deeper considerations. Is the cause for which the fencer is fencing so skilfully, the best? We think it was a crime against the future to resplit this little territory into seven cantonal atoms after the work of fusion among them had begun, and to bequeath to posterity perpetually enduring legacies of provincial jealousies and strife.

The work that was wanted among these too conflicting atoms was to soften down the jarring elements which a separate provincial life and competing provincial interests engen-

dered and nursed; to come to the aid of time in removing them, so that the little heptarchy of so-called sovereign republics might coalesce at last into one political organism—small indeed, but compact and united. The smaller the little cantons, the more needful was perfect union; as Jesuit-ridden Spain, which lay on their frontier, and land-hungry France, which lay beyond, were ever ready to foment internal discords, and rend for their own objects the little confederation into hostile camps. Ever since the irruptions of the barbarians into the Roman Empire, Europe had been struggling toward the effacement of little principalities. Hitherto, the congeries of provinces which lay in this narrow corner of the Continent had almost escaped the pulsings of that life which created the nations of Europe. But now for a hundred years the throbbing and beat of the mighty tides had been felt also in Dutch bosoms. The stirring was dimly understood. True union and fusion of interests they did not comprehend. The national instinct was as yet in its infancy. It was not the creation of a nation that was the inspiring idea of those who represented the principle of union and the tendency of European life. The elevation of the House of Orange was, with them, the supreme political impulse, though there were also vague glimmerings of a union that was bound up with its supremacy.

Here, too, however, as in so many other instances, Nature had largely concealed its further end in a more immediate one. It was only through that House that the scattered elements of power could be gathered up into a strong centre; only by means of it that the hateful partition walls of municipal and provincial privileges, jealousies, and strife could melt away like an unhealthy vapor. A complete unity was the natural outcome, sooner or later, of their blind and passionate strivings; and the attainment thereby of the maximum amount of influence and strength of which their political organism was capable.

Now against this De Witt was laboriously fighting. The great tides of a thousand years he was sweeping out with his little broom. His aim was to prop up tiny autonomies, each

flaring its parchment in the face of the other, in the face of what ostensibly appeared to be the supreme government of the province, in the face of the government of the confederation, and in the eyes of all Europe. He bent his stiff knees before the old documents and worshipped. Is it not pitiful to contemplate him toiling with all his keen ingenuity, and sharp legal processes of intellect and cunning, to invest every town with inviolable sovereign rights; nay, not so much the towns as the small clique of leading families who held the monopoly of administration, looked scornfully down upon the people, and fattened themselves on the communal revenues? This surely was poor work, even taking it at its best. Each town a sovereign: that seems about the maddest and saddest of political ideals, and every Dutchman ought to feel satisfied that De Witt's work failed. What possible result could issue from it, in the long-run, but weakness and strife eternally, and final disintegration and decomposition? The House of Orange represented unity and growth; De Witt represented a republic whose constant and increasing tendency was to resolve itself into a series of unconnected municipal atoms.

The consideration which must entirely exculpate De Witt is that the House of Orange itself had become false to its traditions, gone a royal marriage-hunting, and had been selling the people for that wretched end. And, further, he was not constructing a new political edifice; he had to deal with one whose foundations lay deeply bedded in an immemorial past. The Provinces lay around him with sharply defined lines of self-interest, and even with hatreds; the towns were all there with their worm-eaten documents, sacred in their eyes as so many gospels. These were stubborn facts which would not yield to the ablest or most rational of theories. Dutch life and institutions were not plastic; the tenacious conservatism of the race worked together with their provincial and municipal jealousies to resist change. No man, whatever his insight or greatness, who trusted to working a change in public opinion on this head by peaceful argument, would ever have overcome the provincial isolation, or divested the municipal charters of their sanctity.

We cannot blame De Witt because he could not get rid of these facts, but he did not desire to get rid of them. On the contrary, he seized and gave stability to their worst characteristics, and made the isolation everywhere deeper and wider. His work tended to perpetuate the evil. But we are bound to consider whether any other course was open to him. There seem to us to have been only two ways of making a nation out of that congeries of provincial and municipal atoms: either to raise the Prince of Orange to supreme power, or to begin to lay the foundations of a homogeneous, democratic republic, led by Holland, as the most powerful, the most enterprising and energetic, and the wealthiest State. But could he enthrone, in his political creed, a disloyal House whose two last representatives, for self-aggrandizing ends, would have led the little Republic into strange courses? Of a homogeneous democratic Republic he had no conception; and if he had, could he have enthroned the ignorant and Orange-worshipping populace, whose fitness for political supremacy was still a long way off, and who would have instantly raised the dreaded House to power with shouts of loud acclaim? There was thus no theory of government left him but government by his own order, the oligarchy; and its basis was municipal privilege and corporate home rule. Its chief merit, in De Witt's hands, was that it secured for a time the predominance of Holland, and gave to the United Provinces, as minister and leader, the greatest Dutchman of his time, and one, moreover, on whose public virtue there is hardly a blemish or a spot.

Take this as a glaring instance, which occurred this year in connection with the loss of Brazil and the trial of the officers who surrendered the "Recif," of the ricketiness of the home-rule constitution, which De Witt labored to prop up. It was the old tiresome wrangling, quarrels as to whether the offending officers should be tried by the Province to which they belonged or by the States-General; a court-martial that refused to try the chief military officer unless it received power also to try the civil governor and his council; Holland on its provincial principle sending an officer of Groningen to that Province to be tried there, and Groningen refusing to have anything to

do with him, on the ground that the judicature belonged by right to the States-General.[1]

We must realize, then, that in the absence of external danger to compel union, it was the tact, the wonderful patience, and the eminent ability of De Witt which produced work out of this singular instrument of government. He had sanctioned a form of internal administration which reduced his influence in purely home affairs to a minimum. In fact, a great ruler, bent not on fighting his neighbors but on promoting the culture of his people, could not grow under this system. A man born with a great gift of governing could do nothing under the chopped-up social organization which De Witt favored, unless, like the Princes of Orange, he stood above it, at an altitude of rank and influence which the pugnacious and obstinate burghers could never hope to reach, and packed the municipal cushions with men devoted to his views. No better system could have been devised for abolishing greatness from a nation, or tempting greatness to extinguish the system by force, that the future might have room to be.

It is at this stage of De Witt's career that we are impressed, for the first time, with the comprehensiveness of the oversight which he threw over the Provinces and over Europe itself. This summer, secret-service money had been placed at his command, and he had taken to bribing relatives of his own in the employment of Zealand in order to obtain information regarding the secret deliberations of the States of that Province. The man who himself could not be bribed, yet bribes and corrupts the public service. He has not yet discovered that his own chief clerk is in the pay of the Friesland Prince, and he has not, therefore, the plea to urge of being driven to bribery in self-defence. Charles II. was now out of France, drinking the waters in Spa with the Princess Royal (Princess of Orange) till they were scared out of it by an outbreak of small-pox. De Witt sent a trusty spy from the Hague to watch Charles's movements. Fleeing from the small-pox, Charles and his court resorted to Aken, famous for long centuries as

[1] Aitzema, *Saken*, iii. p. 1120.

the capital city of a greater Charles than this one. The spy proceeded to Aken too, saw there Charles starving, and dancing, and bathing himself in the waters; and saw many of his courtiers starving still more than their King, and living on one meal a day. Charles was too poor to keep a carriage, but a gleam of state surrounded him while the visit of his sister lasted. We read, in the spy's letters, of Heenfleet driving from Aken to Luyck (Liege) in a carriage and six to get remittances of money which had been forwarded to the Princess Royal. Probably most of it was delivered to the poor but light-hearted King. The Friesland Prince and Stadtholder also appeared on the scene at Aken, and then there were innumerable "santés" drunk. He had been escorting the elder Princess of Orange to Berlin, to that daughter who had been once the subject of traffic between her and this same Charles, but whom a kinder destiny had made the wife of the Great Elector. The spy learned that Brederode had also accompanied them part of the way; that the Prince and Brederode had quarrelled about the latter supporting the Act which excluded the little Prince, and that when Brederode bade them farewell on their journey, and was setting out on his homeward voyage, the suites of the Dowager and the Prince hooted him off with contemptuous jeering cries of "Cromwell! Cromwell!"[1]—a nickname which they had fastened upon him since his vote for the Act of Exclusion.

The King was detained at Aken by want of money, and partly also in the hope that Holland would be compelled to withdraw the Act of Exclusion. Otherwise he would have set out in autumn for Cologne, where De Witt had another spy in readiness to take up the record of his proceedings.[2] But a few weeks' observation of Charles's doings told him that the exiled king was powerless to do Holland harm, and Charles was left unobserved to his dancing and his misery.

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[1] MS. letters of Jacob Ruysch, Advocate before the Court of Holland, cousin of De Witt, to De Witt, under various dates from the middle of August to the middle of October, 1654. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. De Witt to Lucas van Hoff (agent of their High Mightinesses at Cologne), dated September 12. *Hague Archives.*

About the same time a spy was sent to the neighborhood of Bremen, to study the defences and capabilities of the town in case it was necessary to assist it against the new King of Sweden, who was capturing strong places around it and threatening the town itself. The States' ambassadors abroad were in constant private correspondence with him whenever a question affecting the interests of the United Provinces had arisen.[1]

The great form of Oliver Cromwell he had by no means taken the measure of. He was conscious he did not understand this mighty man who had arisen in England; he could not trace his huge shadowy dimensions; he could not fix him clearly in his eye. De Witt's mind was in its leading features a lawyer's mind, desiring precise and sharp outlines of things, and it was this definite outline of Oliver that he was unable to draw. Who can clip out the shape of a man of commanding genius, of intense and vehement earnestness, and of infinite religious depth? In his difficulty he had written to the ambassadors in England; and their reply not satisfying him, he consulted a clergyman of Dordrecht about Oliver's "humor on the subject of religion," as he named it.[2] The letter of the ambassadors and the answer of the Dordrecht clergyman are not extant. It was preliminary to a plan he had devised, whereby he might bring a little honor to his own country, pacify the mind of the community, and mollify those of the clergy who were refractory and turbulent in consequence of the exclusion of the House of Orange.[3] De Witt

[1] MS. Secret Resolutions of the States-General of June 16. *Hague Archives.*

[2] MS. De Witt to the Predicant Jacobus Lydius, at Dort, dated August 26. *Hague Archives.*

[3] MS. De Witt to Beverning and Newport, August 28. In this letter De Witt remarks that for the purpose of producing absolute peace in the Low Countries, and of preventing further agitations against Holland, and for the purpose of confirming the treaty with England, nothing was so necessary as that the community should be brought to an absolute acquiescence in the negotiations with the Protector, and that, having deliberated with some of the leading men of Holland as to the best means of accomplishing this, they had come to the opinion that nothing could so well contribute to it as the implanting in the clergy of moderation and a rightly directed zeal; that in order to awaken such a disposition, over and above the private means for that end, the chief means would be to impress the clergy with the belief that the Protector upholds the true Christian reformed religion,

wanted Oliver to summon a great English synod, on the model of that of Dordrecht, for the purpose of settling the religious difficulties of England—Oliver had already effectually settled them for the rest of his lifetime—and to invite some of the Dutch clergy to assist in the deliberations. We know that nothing came of this idea, but it shows us De Witt's anxiety to allay the irritation which was general throughout the Provinces.

De Witt stood altogether on a lower plane than Cromwell. We regard him rather as a man of rare and singular talent, than as one of the chosen great ones of the earth, which Cromwell was. He stands far above the common run of men; and he was head and shoulders above nearly all the notable men of his time. He would have been greater if the movement of his limbs had been less burdened with the Dutch governing apparatus, which hampered him at every step of his path. His true place mentally is with the Richelieus, and Mazarins, and William III.'s—men all of quite a secondary rank of intellect. He has no affinity with the Charlemagnes, the Gustavus Adolphuses, and Cromwells of the race. He is not one whom the world can ever greatly admire or love;

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and is favorable to "het presbyterium ofte een vaste kerckenordre." Then he proceeds to mention the result of interviews he had with Sydney, who assured him that the Protector "voor een van de hooghste poincten van syne seeckerheyt en gerustheyt van binnen houdt een vast voet opt' ministerium te mogen stabilieren en alle de sectarisz mitsgaders de geestgedrevenen die sonder eenich wettich beroep haer tot prediken begeven, en alles wtwerpen 'tgene haer in mondt valt sonder eenich respect van overicheden ofte magistraten metter tydt t' eenemael te dempen; daer toe oock seer pertinente redenen allegerende met byvoeginge dat den Heer Protector jegenwoordich besich was met advis van eenige predikanten opt' gene vz is een vaste ordre te beramen; op alle t'welcke ick goedgedacht hebbe V.E. in bedencken te geven off met den Heer Protector soude connen werden gedisponneert omme tot de voorgeroerde besoignes en het beraemen van een vaste kerkelycke order alsvooren, oock eenige vermaerden predicanten uit dese landen derwarts te beschryven en te assumeren, daertoe wy alhier in respective provincien vel soodaenige souden weten aen te wysen, die door capricieuse en brouillante humeuren ofte andersins syne Hoocht. in utwercking van syn voornemen en 't bereycken van syn oochmerck geene obstaculen soude geven," etc. This shows that De Witt would have made sure that the Dutch clerical deputies to an English synod would be men who would not prove troublesome to Oliver. The subject is resumed in MS. letter of De Witt to Beverning and Newport of September 11.

and assuredly he is not one whom it will ever admit into that sacred Pantheon in which the memories of the lower gods are preserved.[1]

[1] It will be observed that the three volumes of the *Calendar of State-papers, Domestic Series*, relating to the time of the Commonwealth, preserved in the State-paper Department of the Public Record Office, and edited by Mrs. Green, have not been cited in this history. The reason is that the present volume was written before the publication of the *Calendar*, and the author had already made extensive researches, bearing upon the period in question, among the Manuscripts of the Public Record Office. There is nothing in Mrs. Green's volumes to render necessary any modification of the text.

END OF VOLUME I.

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